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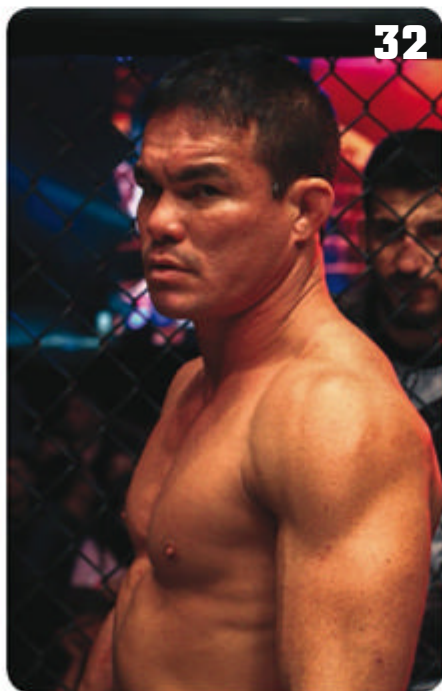
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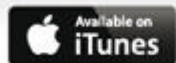




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LOH DOWN

# MELBOURNE OUT ADELAIDE IN

**A** amazing news for the resident MMA fans of South Australia. Great news for the MMA community in general, to be sure. But surely a dagger in the heart of Victorian sport?

It surely is virtuous news that UFC will be touching Down Under again so soon with their show scheduled for Adelaide. And Australia's favourite warrior, Mark Hunt, is headlining the way, no doubt looking down the barrel at another crowd-pleasing slugfest to the end.

But I can't help but feel that this event is almost a taunt towards Victoria and its self-proclaimed home of Australian sport. As if UFC is trying to tell the Vic government: if you're going to muck around, then we're going off to your old arch rivals South Australia, where they want us.

Well, if it is intentioned so, it certainly has worked on me! It's embarrassing that after plain English promises from the Labor Government that we would have the cage in action in 2015 that nothing has happen yet.

It's crazy to think that we have a chance to hold an enormous sporting event, the likes of which very few around the world have ever seen, only to drop the ball on a technicality.

Anyway, let's hope this event does give the new sports minister John Erin, and his party, the shove that is needed.

That aside, it is definitely positive news about the 10 May event scheduled for Adelaide. It's great to see such a rich line-up of homegrown talent.

However, if I had to be 100 per cent honest, the card is a blessing and a curse for Aussie MMA.

It's good that our guys and girls get to fight on home soil in front of the home crowd. And it is noble that we get to see our local heroes under the big lights.

But on the flip side, it would be great to see our Aussie fighters get more international attention and get the chance to show the rest of the world what they have.

Especially when you have a situation, as we do on this card, where two Aussies are taking on each other.

Plus, I'm sure a lot of the Aussie fans would love to see some of the bigger names from around the world come down to see us as well.

I understand the logistics behind all of this, but I know this is feedback we have taken in from the fans and I can certainly understand that point of view.

Either way, I'm sure it will prove to be yet another great event on Australian land and I hope to see you all there!

And let's hope Vic can get onboard in time for November!



Jarrah Loh  
Editor



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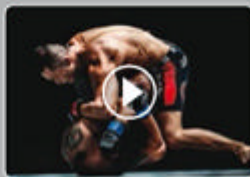
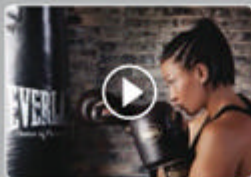
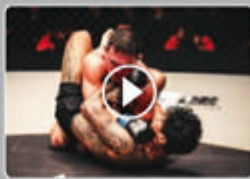
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#### This issue's In-Site content

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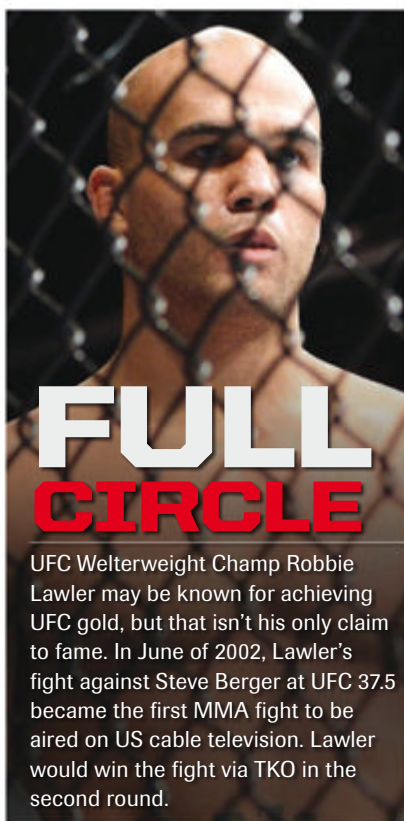
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## FULL CIRCLE

UFC Welterweight Champ Robbie Lawler may be known for achieving UFC gold, but that isn't his only claim to fame. In June of 2002, Lawler's fight against Steve Berger at UFC 37.5 became the first MMA fight to be aired on US cable television. Lawler would win the fight via TKO in the second round.

// PHOTOS BY USA TODAY SPORTS

## C'MON MAN

In the lead-up to his flyweight fight against Ian McCall at UFC 183, John Lineker missed weight by 4 lbs (1.81 kg). This was the fourth time Lineker has come in overweight while fighting for the UFC; more times than any other fighter in UFC history.



## THE HAMMER: HAMMERED

Mark Coleman was originally scheduled to fight Randy Couture for the UFC Heavyweight Championship at UFC 14. But when Randy Couture withdrew due to injury, Coleman fought last-minute replacement Pete Williams instead. Williams would go on to win the fight via head-kick knockout. It was the first KO loss of Coleman's career.

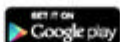
## QUOTING QUADROS

The MMA term 'lay and pray' can be attributed to play-by-play commentator Stephen Quadros, who coined the phrase at PRIDE 12 while calling the fight between Gilbert Yvel and Kazuyuki Fujita.



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## NEW HIGH, NEW LOW

According to FightMetric.com, the 137 significant strikes landed by Anderson Silva against Nick Diaz at UFC 183 were a career high. Unfortunately, after testing positive for banned substances, the bout now faces the possibility of being ruled a no-contest.





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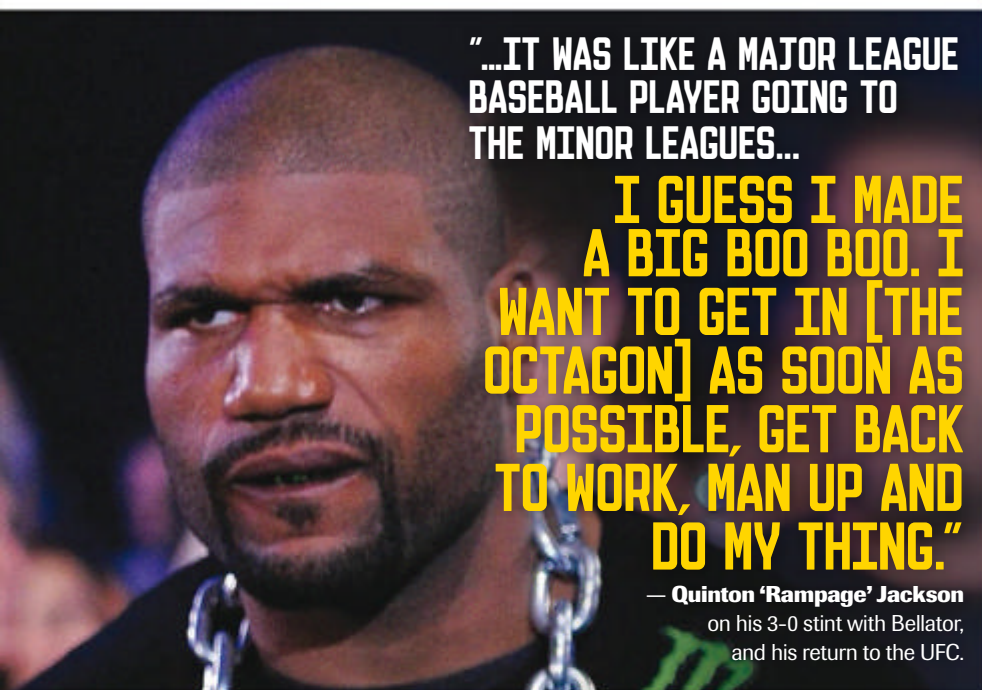
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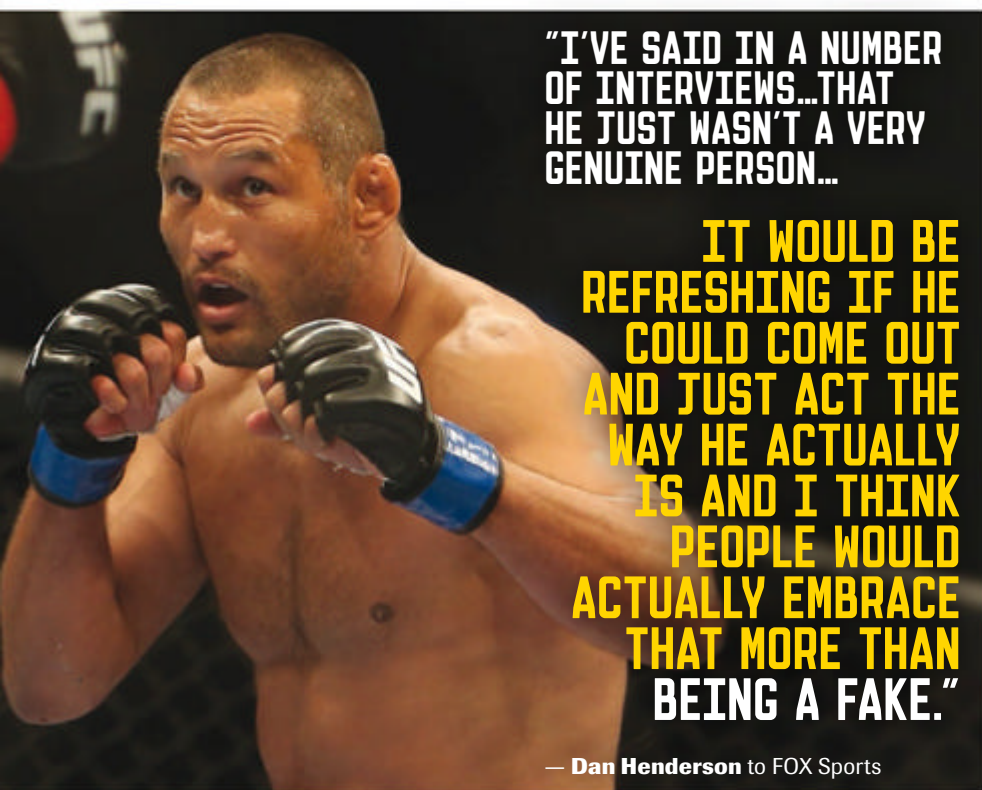
— **Quinton 'Rampage' Jackson**  
on his 3-0 stint with Bellator,  
and his return to the UFC.



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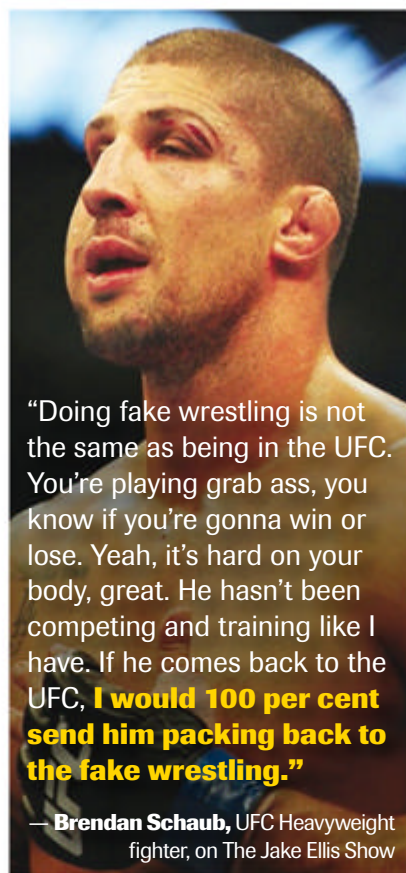
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"I'VE SAID IN A NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS...THAT HE JUST WASN'T A VERY GENUINE PERSON..."

**IT WOULD BE REFRESHING IF HE COULD COME OUT AND JUST ACT THE WAY HE ACTUALLY IS AND I THINK PEOPLE WOULD ACTUALLY EMBRACE THAT MORE THAN BEING A FAKE."**

— **Dan Henderson** to FOX Sports



"Doing fake wrestling is not the same as being in the UFC. You're playing grab ass, you know if you're gonna win or lose. Yeah, it's hard on your body, great. He hasn't been competing and training like I have. If he comes back to the UFC, **I would 100 per cent send him packing back to the fake wrestling."**

— **Brendan Schaub**, UFC Heavyweight fighter, on The Jake Ellis Show



"I would love to fight Dana White. I'd love to beat him up. He talks bad about fighters all the time, disrespects fighters. Yeah, he's a piece of work..."

**I WOULD FIGHT DANA FOR FREE."**

— **Cody McKenzie**,  
UFC welterweight fighter to  
MMAFighting.com

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# 5 MINUTES WITH... BRAD TAVARES

BY DUANE FINLEY // PHOTO BY JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA-USA TODAY SPORTS

**You are a young fighter on the rise and I'm sure things are getting hectic for you these days.**

I'm in the middle of moving right now and it's about to get crazy. Over the past year I was pushing for big fights against big names, but this year, I just want to go in there to fight and have fun. I want to be a better version of myself every time I get in there. I want to go out there and put on some fun and exciting fights.

**Well, let's get down to business. The last time I saw you was at the WSOF show and you had some tight fashion going on. Your shirt was fresh and your watch and shoes were on a coordinated colour scheme. Is fashion something Brad Tavares takes seriously?**

I'm not one of those dudes who needs to stay fly all the time like that (laughs). I remember when I was really young, my mum used to dress me, but it was always something I wanted to do for myself. When I got a little older she let me have more responsibility and I've kept things going from there. I have a decent sense of what looks good on me and what colours go together. But I'm not one of those guys who are like, "I gotta stay fresh. I gotta stay fly." That's not me, bro. I like to look good but nothing crazy. I think that comes naturally to me.

**You are a proud Hawaiian fighter and you are always rocking the gold chain. Now that look has come and gone and is coming back in the States, but the Hawaiian contingent has always represented when it comes to the gold. What is the story with that?**

I think it's funny that more and more people have been noticing it recently. It's weird for me because I've been wearing this chain every day since I've been a freshman in high school. In Hawaii nobody really notices it because gold and gold chains have never gone out of style there. But I think in mainstream, like in hip hop, and whatever is going on now, there are a lot of rappers getting back into it. I think that's why people are starting to notice. But it's always been something I've had.

**Recently Frankie Edgar was asked if he was bringing it back and he said, "Bro, it never left." So you are on the same vibe as 'The Answer' when it comes to rocking the gold then?**

Oh, for sure. I think those guys out in New Jersey have always kept it as part of their fashion as well.

**You left Hawaii to move to Las Vegas so you could train and fight full time at a young age. What was it like making that move and all the adjustments that surely came with it?**

I was 19 years old when my coach Brandon Wolff took myself and a bunch of the up-and-coming guys in Hawaii and set a path for us. The way he saw it, we were going to spend two years on Oahu and conquer the Hawaiian MMA circuit, and once that was accomplished, we were going to Las Vegas. At that time Vegas was the Mecca of fighting. It was the fight capital of the world and everybody was there to train as well. My coach set forth this plan and I was very eager to see it through.

**So you just packed up all your things and took off for Las Vegas?**

Yeah, bro, and it all happened really fast. I was working for an airline at the time and I put in a transfer to go from working in Hawaii to working in Las Vegas. Upon getting it I had to be in Vegas in two weeks. So I had to pack up all my things, put them in boxes and suitcases and ship them and get it to Vegas so it would be there when I arrived. It was crazy and I would say that was probably the hardest part of it all.

**You were a young fighter on the rise when you first came to Xtreme Couture and now you are on the verge of breaking through into the coveted top-10 rankings of the middleweight division. What has it been like experiencing so much growth since you first landed at the gym?**

I've definitely experienced a lot of growth since first coming to the gym. I'm also not really one of those guys who sits and thinks about things like that. I'm not one to try to put myself into different positions, but I also don't mind when I have the opportunity to become a leader. I hope I can lead people in the best way possible, but I'm not out there striving or looking for that. I just want to enjoy it with them and be part of the team. I'm proud to represent Xtreme Couture and I'm excited to help the young guys who are coming up.

**Anyone who has ever watched you fight has seen how serious your tattoo game is. What is your ink all about for you?**

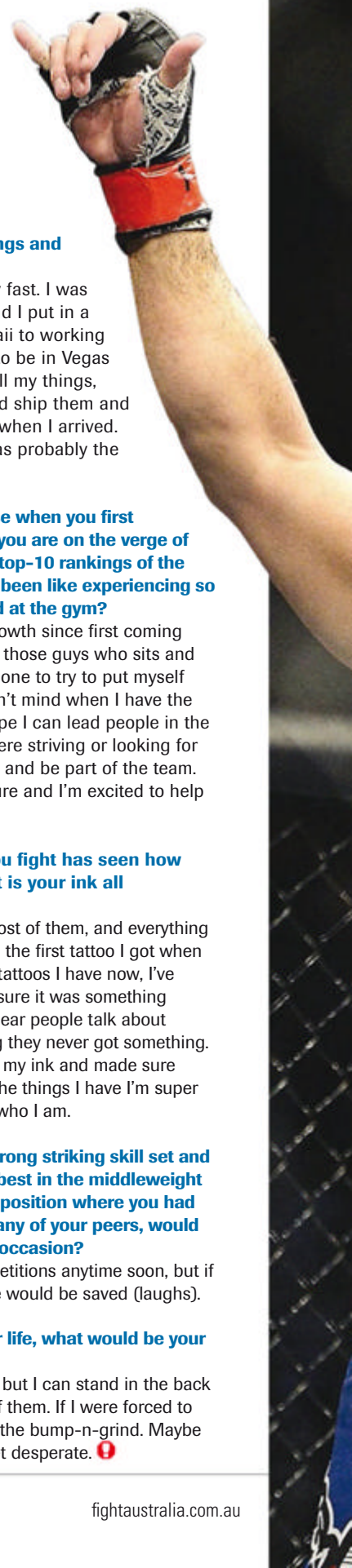
My Poly [Polynesian] tats make up most of them, and everything I've done I've done for a reason. From the first tattoo I got when I was 16 up to getting the rest of the tattoos I have now, I've always thought it through and made sure it was something I really wanted. Too many times you hear people talk about regretting getting tattoos and wishing they never got something. I never wanted to feel that way about my ink and made sure whatever I got I did so for a reason. The things I have I'm super proud of and they represent me and who I am.

**Your fight game is based off of a strong striking skill set and your footwork is up there with the best in the middleweight division. That said, if you were in a position where you had to throw down in a dance off with any of your peers, would Brad Tavares be able to rise to the occasion?**

I probably won't win any dance competitions anytime soon, but if it were to save my life I'm sure my life would be saved (laughs).

**So if you had to dance to save your life, what would be your go-to move to get the job done?**

There wouldn't be any breakdancing, but I can stand in the back and sway side to side with the best of them. If I were forced to come up off the wall then I would hit the bump-n-grind. Maybe throw in a cabbage patch if things get desperate. 🍆







3 Jan, 2015; Las Vegas, Nevada, USA; Brad Tavares celebrates after defeating Nate Marquardt in their middleweight bout at UFC 182 at MGM Grand Garden Arena.

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Each year, along with everyone else under the sun, *FIGHT!* chooses the best performer from the world of MMA. We had some tough choices to make, but ultimately, we feel we made the best pick possible, so here he is. Your 2014 *FIGHT!* Magazine Fighter of the Year.

Agree or disagree? Let us know online at: [facebook/FightAustralia](https://www.facebook.com/FightAustralia)



PHOTO BY BILL STREICHER-USA TODAY SPORTS



Donald Cerrone lands a punch on Jim Miller during a five-round lightweight bout at Revel Casino

# FIGHTER of the YEAR

## DONALD 'COWBOY' CERRONE


**T**raditionally, our selection for Fighter of the Year has been one of the UFC's current division champions. Robbie Lawler, for example, would have been a solid choice and no one would have batted an eye, but ultimately it was Donald Cerrone who made the cut — not because he holds a belt, but because he had one hell of a year.

After dropping a fight to Rafael dos Anjos, Cerrone rebounded in November of 2013 with a win over Evan Dunham. Still, many were wondering if 'Cowboy's' best days were behind him. Eager to get back in the cage as soon as possible, Cerrone soon went on to dispatch Adriano Martins via head kick in January of 2014 — his first fight of the new year. But it wasn't until a submission victory over rising lightweight dynamo Edson Barboza in April that it was clear that Cerrone was back in top form. Next up was Jim Miller in July; a KO via head kick and punches put that one in the books. Then he took on Eddie Alvarez at UFC 178. Considered by many to be the best lightweight outside of the UFC at the time, Alvarez entered the contest carrying a considerable amount of hype and Bellator gold to boot. Cerrone sent him to the locker room with a loss too, this time by unanimous decision.

Four fights in 2014. Four victories. Difficult by any stretch of the imagination and incredibly difficult in the shark tank

of the UFC's unforgiving lightweight division. But honestly, we're not sure what is tougher, actually winning four fights in a year or staying injury free long enough to actually take the fights in the first place.

A decade ago there were only a handful of truly talented fighters, but as the pool of MMA talent has grown ever larger, so too has the challenge of maintaining a position at the top of the field. For a fighter in this position, whether fighting for the belt or welcoming a completely unproven newcomer to the UFC, the danger of being sent to the back of the line looms greater now than ever before. The fact that Cowboy went out of his way to take on all challengers and was victorious in doing so is a rare accomplishment indeed. When you consider the mental aspect of overcoming two losses in 2013, his current streak of seven wins (four in 2014 and five within the span of 12 months) makes his performance over the past year that much more impressive.

Lately it seems MMA has become a sport where protecting your record has become far too common. In stark contrast, Cerrone's dauntless confidence, fearless attitude, and his ability to overcome, embody the fighting spirit that we all admire and that is why he is our choice for Fighter of the Year. 





Ronda Rousey prior to the start of her fight against Sara McMann

PHOTO BY STEPHEN R. SYLVANIE USA TODAY SPORTS



# FIGHT!

## M A G A Z I N E

# 2014 YEAR IN REVIEW

**A** lot can happen in a year — the crowning of champions, thrilling comebacks, trash-talking to thrill (or disturb) the masses, cringe-worthy news snippets and fights that make us remember why we fell in love with the sport in the first place. The year 2014 has been one hell of a roller-coaster ride, but aren't you glad you were strapped in for the journey? While we don't have nearly enough pages to provide a fully inclusive list, here's a good shot at last year's highlights. Reminisce and enjoy!

BY BY TERRY E. BUSH

Luke Rockhold (red gloves) fights Costas Philippou (blue gloves)



### 4 JANUARY >>>>>>

UFC Fight Night 34 kicked off the new year with its first event in Singapore. Tarek Saffiedine won by UD over Hyun Gyu Lim in the first Fight of the Night of 2014.

### 15 JANUARY >>>>>>

Luke Rockhold wins KO of the Night honours with a body kick over Costa Philippou at UFC Fight Night 45. The event led live into the pilot episode of *The Ultimate Fighter Nations: Canada vs. Australia*.

### 25 JANUARY >>>>>>

UFC on Fox 10 featured Benson Henderson and Josh Thomson, but it was Alex Caceres and Sergio Pettis who delivered the Fight of the Night (Caceres also earned Submission of the Night for his rear-naked choke over Pettis).

### 1 FEBRUARY >>>>>>

UFC 169: Barao vs Faber II boasts a new record of the most decisions (10) on a UFC card. Abel Trujillo and Jamie Varner pleased the masses with a Fight of the Night performance as Trujillo KO'd Varner.

### 15 FEBRUARY >>>>>>

UFC Fight Night 36: Machida vs Mousasi; Jaragua do Sul, Brazil was the first event to feature UFC's new post-fight bonus structure with Performance of the Night honours as opposed to KO or Submission of the Night. Ten decision wins make this event tie the most decision victories in one event (UFC169) and its overall time of 2:53:32 made it the longest event in UFC history.

### 22 FEBRUARY >>>>>>

UFC 170: Rousey vs McMann. The champ breaks away from her signature armbar to deliver her first TKO victory at 1:06 of the first round.

### 28 FEBRUARY >>>>>>

Bellator MMA kicks off Season 10, focusing on middleweight and light heavyweight four-man tournaments.

### 1 MARCH >>>>>>

TUF China Finale; Macau, SAR, China. Headliner Dong Hyun Kim delivers the first spinning back elbow KO victory in UFC history over John Hathaway.

### 8 MARCH >>>>>>

UFC FN: Gustafsson vs Manuwa; London, England, UK. On his path back to Jon Jones, Alexander Gustafsson levels Jimi Manuwa with a TKO via knees and punches in the second round.

### 15 MARCH >>>>>>

UFC 171: Hendricks vs Lawler. One of the most exciting fights of the year, Johnny Hendricks and Robbie Lawler gave new meaning to the phrase 'barnburner', mixing it up in Dallas, where Hendricks walked away with a UD win over Lawler.

### 23 MARCH >>>>

UFC FN 38: Henderson vs Shogun II; Natal, Brazil. Dan Henderson proved that age ain't nothin' but a number and hometown advantage don't mean a thing by handing Mauricio 'Shogun' Rua a TKO loss.

### 11 APRIL >>>>

UFC FN 39: Nogueira vs Nelson; Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. In the UFC's second showing in Abu Dhabi, Roy Nelson KO's Antonio Rodrigo Nogueira.

Bellator 116: 43-year-old Belarusian fighter Vladimir Matyushenko announces his retirement after a submission loss to Joey Beltran. Matyushenko accumulated a 27-8 career record over 17 years.

### 16 APRIL >>>>

TUF Nations Finale: Bisping vs Kennedy; Quebec City, Quebec, Canada. In the finals of *TUF Nations: Canada vs. Australia*, Elias Theodorou TKOs Sheldon Westcott to become the middleweight winner. Chad Laprise wins via split decision over Olivier Aubin-Mercier to become the welterweight winner. Coach Patrick Cote beat Coach Kyle Noke via UD.

### 18 APRIL >>>>

Bellator 117: Douglas Lima defeats Rick Hawn in a second-round doctor stoppage to become the Bellator Middleweight Champion.

### 26 APRIL >>>>

UFC 172: Jones vs Teixeira. In his seventh UFC lightweight title defence, Jon Jones earns a UD victory over Glover Teixeira. Anthony Johnson returns to the UFC after more than two years with a UD victory over Phil Davis.

### 9 MAY >>>>

Bellator 119: Daniel Weichel defeats Desmond Green to become the Bellator Season 10 Tournament Final winner.

### 10 MAY >>>>

UFC Fight Night 40: Brown vs Silva set the record for second-most wins by those considered underdogs. Among the gems, a Performance of the Night KO by Johnny Eduardo over Eddie Wineland.

### 17 MAY >>>>

Bellator 120: Quinton 'Rampage' Jackson defeats Muhammed Lawal via UD to become the light heavyweight tournament winner. Alexander Volkov becomes the heavyweight tournament winner by submitting Blagoi Ivanov.

### 24 MAY >>>>

UFC 173: Barao vs Dillashaw. Team Alpha Male's perceived underdog T.J. Dillashaw became the UFC Bantamweight champion with a TKO victory over Renan Barao. Daniel Cormier increases his stats to 15-0 with a technical submission over Dan Henderson.

### 31 MAY >>>>

UFC Fight Night 41: Munoz vs Mousasi; Berlin, Germany. The UFC's first event in Berlin was one of two events held on the same day.

Glover Teixeira ducks under a kick from Jon Jones during the UFC light-heavyweight championship fight at Baltimore Arena. Jones retained the belt



PHOTO BY TOMMY GILLIGAN USA TODAY SPORTS



Chris Weidman and Lyoto Machida prepare to strike

PHOTO BY STEPHEN R. SYLVANIE USA TODAY SPORTS



Robbie Lawler



## 2014: YEAR IN REVIEW

TUF Brazil 3 Finale: Miocic vs Maldonado; Sao Paulo, Brazil. Antonio Carlos, Jr is crowned the heavyweight finalist of the series and Warley Alves the middleweight finalist.

### 7 JUNE >>>>

UFC Fight Night 42: Henderson vs Khabilov. With its first event in New Mexico, Benson Henderson submits Rustam Khabilov with a fourth round rear-naked choke.

### 12 JUNE >>>>

Chael Sonnen announces his retirement from MMA following controversy over failed drug tests. By month's end, UFC and Fox Sports terminated his contract as a UFC analyst. A month later, Nevada State Athletic Commission (NSAC) suspended him for two years from MMA competition.

### 14 JUNE >>>>

UFC 174: Johnson vs Bagautinov; Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. In his fourth title defence, Mighty Mouse retains his UFC flyweight title via unanimous decision.

### 18 JUNE >>>>

Changing of the Guard: Bjorn Rebney, chairman and CEO, and Tim Danaher, president, both part ways with Bellator. Former founder and CEO of Strikeforce, Scott Coker, steps in as president of Bellator MMA.

### 28 JUNE >>>>

UFC Fight Night 43: TeHuna vs Marquardt; Auckland, New Zealand. Nate Marquardt earns a Performance of the Night bonus for his armbar submission over James Te Huna.

UFC Fight Night 44: Swanson vs Stephens. First-time UFC host city San Antonio saw Cub Swanson and Jeremy Stephens put on a Fight of the Night performance, with Swanson taking home a UD win.

### 5 JULY >>>>

UFC 175: Weidman vs Machida. In his second successful title defence, Chris Weidman remains the UFC Middleweight Champion with a UD win over former champ Lyoto Machida. Ronda Rousey KO's Alexis Davis in 16 seconds.

### 6 JULY >>>>

TUF 19 Finale: Team Edgar vs Team Penn. Corey Anderson becomes the light heavyweight winner and Eddie Gordon becomes the middleweight winner of the season. BJ Penn debuts at featherweight and announces his retirement after losing to Frankie Edgar for a third time.

### 16 JULY >>>>

UFC Fight Night 45: Cerrone vs Miller. In his third win of the year, Donald Cerrone KO's Jim Miller.

### 19 JULY >>>>

UFC Fight Night 46: McGregor vs Brandao; Dublin, Ireland. In front of a home-town crowd, Conor McGregor backed up all his fiery trash talk with a first-round TKO victory over Diego Brandao.

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## 25 JULY >>>>

Bellator 122: Andrey Koreshkov defeats Adam McDonough by UD to win the Summer Series Welterweight Tournament final. Brandon Halsey armbars Brett Cooper to win the Summer Series Middleweight Tournament final.

## 26 JULY >>>>

UFC on Fox 12: Lawler vs Brown. With a winner to receive a title shot against Johnny Hendricks for the welterweight title, Robbie Lawler decisions Matt Brown and prepares for his spot in UFC history. Anthony Johnson continues his UFC comeback tour with a 44-second KO over Antonio Rogerio Nogueira.

## 29 JULY >>>>

UFC President Dana White announces that Anderson Silva will return to action in 2015 at UFC 183 to face Nick Diaz.

## 2 AUGUST >>>>

UFC 176 was due to feature Jose Aldo vs Chad Mendes in their second matchup, but when Aldo withdrew from the event citing injury, the event was scrapped altogether, marking the second time in UFC history that an event was cancelled due to the lack of a high-profile headlining fight.

## 23 AUGUST >>>>

UFC Fight Night 48: Bisping vs Le; Macau, SAR, China. This event crowned the *TUF: China* featherweight winner Ning Guangyou. Michael Bisping TKOs his way to victory over Cung Le.

UFC Fight Night 49: Henderson vs dos Anjos. In the main event, Rafael dos Anjos KOs Benson Henderson in the first round.

## 30 AUGUST >>>>

UFC 177: Dillashaw vs Soto. In what was to be Dillashaw vs Barao II, Renan Barao was admitted to hospital the day of weigh-ins after a severe weight cut. Joe Soto stepped in on a day's notice to face Dillashaw, and was KO'd for his efforts.

## 5 SEPTEMBER >>>>

UFC Fight Night 50: Jacare vs Mousasi. In the main event, 'Jacare' Souza submits Gegard Mousasi with a third-round guillotine choke. Ben Rothwell rings Alistair Overeem's clock with a first-round TKO and Joe Lauzon and Michael Chiesa fight to a bloody doctor stoppage, earning Fight of the Night honours.

Bellator 123: For the first time in Bellator history, the organisation hosts an event the same night as a UFC event — within kilometres of each other. Patricio Freire upsets Pat Curran to become the new Bellator Featherweight Champion.

**Robbie Lawler defends against Matt Brown**



PHOTO BY KYLE TERADA — USA TODAY SPORTS

**Demetrious Johnson fights Chris Cariaso during a flyweight title bout on the UFC 178 card**



PHOTO BY STEPHEN R. SYLVANIE — USA TODAY SPORTS



TJ Dillashaw

## 2014: YEAR IN REVIEW

### 12 SEPTEMBER >>>>

Bellator 124: Liam McGeary defeats Kelly Anundson to become the Light Heavyweight Tournament winner. Bellator Light Heavyweight Champion Emanuel Newton KOs Joey Beltran with a spinning backfist to retain his belt.

### 13 SEPTEMBER >>>>

UFC Fight Night 51: Bigfoot vs Arlovski; Brasilia, Brazil. Andrei Arlovski brings Antonio 'Bigfoot' Silva down with a first-round KO.

### 19 SEPTEMBER >>>>

After seemingly ducking out of random drug testings, Wanderlei Silva, a 17-year veteran of MMA (35-12-1-1), announces his retirement, and follows up with a series of YouTube videos trashing the UFC.

### 20 SEPTEMBER >>>>

UFC Fight Night 52: Hunt vs Nelson; Saitama, Japan. Mark Hunt KOs Roy Nelson and Myles Jury defeats Takanori Gomi via TKO in the first round.

### 23 SEPTEMBER >>>>

The World Series of Fighting announces it will be entering the pay-per-view market in 2015 along with plans for an aggressive revenue model — splitting pay-per-view earnings with its fighters 50/50.

### 26 SEPTEMBER >>>>

Bellator 126: Brandon Halsey defeats middleweight champion Alexander Schlemenko by rear-naked choke to become the new Bellator Middleweight Champion. Marcin Held defeats Patricky Freire to become the Lightweight Tournament champion.

### 27 SEPTEMBER >>>>

UFC 178: Johnson vs Cariaso. In his fifth successful title defence, Demetrious Johnson defeats Chris Cariaso by Kimura. Donald Cerrone spoils the much-anticipated UFC debut of Eddie Alvarez, and Conor McGregor TKOs Dustin Poirier. Relegated to the prelim card, former champion Dominick Cruz TKOs Takeya Mizugaki.

### 4 OCTOBER >>>>

UFC Fight Night 53: Nelson vs Story; Stockholm, Sweden. Rick Story defeats Gunnar Nelson via split decision.

UFC Fight Night 54: MacDonald vs Saffiedine; Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Rory MacDonald defeats Tarec Saffiedine by TKO.

### 10 OCTOBER >>>>

Bellator 128: Joe Warren decisions Eduardo Dantas to become the undisputed Bellator Bantamweight Champion after becoming interim titleholder at Bellator 118.

### 25 OCTOBER >>>>

UFC 179: Aldo vs Mendes II; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In a Fight of the Year contender, the champion retains his featherweight strap, defeating Chad Mendes by UD. The win marks Aldo's sixth decision victory of his nine title defences.

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## 8 NOVEMBER >>>>

UFC Fight Night 55: Rockhold vs Bisping; Sydney, Australia. Luke Rockhold defeats Michael Bisping by guillotine choke.

UFC Fight Night 56: Shogun vs St. Preux; Uberlandia, Brazil. Ovince St. Preux KO's Mauricio 'Shogun' Rua in 34 seconds.

## 15 NOVEMBER >>>>

UFC 180: Werdum vs Hunt; Mexico City, Mexico. With its first showing in Mexico, 21,000 tickets were sold out in eight hours. Fabricio Werdum capped off the night with a TKO over Mark Hunt. Henry Briones and Guido Cannetti collected Fight of the Night honours for their preliminary-card fight that aired on UFC Fight Pass.

Bellator 131: The highest rated Bellator event, with a 1.2 million viewership, featured former UFC fighters Tito Ortiz and Stephan Bonnar in a grudge match that saw Ortiz walk away with the split-decision victory. Will Brooks became the vacant Bellator Lightweight Champion, defeating Michael Chandler for the second time in a row, this time by TKO.

## 22 NOVEMBER >>>>

UFC Fight Night 57: Edgar vs Swanson. Frankie Edgar amazed with his last-minute neck crank submission over Cub Swanson at 4:56 of the fifth round — the latest stoppage in UFC history.

## 2 DECEMBER >>>>

UFC announces a landmark six-year deal with Reebok to provide the promotion and its fighters with athletic wear, with a new athletic outfitting policy to follow.

## 6 DECEMBER >>>>

UFC 181: Hendricks vs Lawler II. TUF Season 20 coaches Anthony Pettis and Gilbert Melendez battled for the lightweight title, with Pettis sinking in a guillotine choke to retain the strap. In the main event, Robbie Lawler wins by split decision over Johnny Hendricks to become the new UFC Welterweight Champion.

During the UFC 181 broadcast, it was announced that former WWE star Phil 'CM Punk' Brooks had signed a multi-fight deal with the UFC and would debut in 2015.

## 12 DECEMBER >>>>

TUF 20 Finale: A Champion Will Be Crowned. Carla Esparza becomes the inaugural UFC Women's Strawweight champion after submitting Rose Namajunas.

## 13 DECEMBER >>>>

UFC on Fox 13: dos Santos vs Miocic. In the UFC's first event in Phoenix, headliner Junior dos Santos won by UD over Stipe Miocic. In more big-boy news, Alistair Overeem wins by TKO over Stefan Struve. Nate Diaz, in his only fight in 2014, loses via UD to Rafael dos Anjos and is fined 20 per cent of his purse for not making weight.

## 15 DECEMBER >>>>

News breaks of a class-action lawsuit against UFC and Zuffa filed by three law firms representing former UFC fighters Cung Le, Nate Quarry and Jon Fitch. It alleges unfair practices, conspiring to keep fighter pay low and violation of anti-trust laws, among other things.

## 20 DECEMBER >>>>

UFC Fight Night 58: Machida vs Dollaway; Barueri, Brazil. Lyoto Machida defeats CB Dollaway with a body kick and punches at 1:02 of the first round. The UFC announces the return of Quinton 'Rampage' Jackson. **0**



Tito Ortiz makes his traditional appearance at Bellator's first PPV event

PHOTO: BELLATOR





Stipe Miocic and Junior dos Santos

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PHOTO BY MARK J. REBILAS - USA TODAY SPORTS





Anthony Johnson  
strikes Phil Davis

# A RUMBLE BECOMES A ROAR

After barking up the wrong tree for so long, Anthony 'Rumble' Johnson realises his full dimension as a light heavyweight contender.

BY CHUCK MINDENHALL

I can remember being cageside when Anthony Johnson stood in against Yoshiyuki Yoshida at UFC 104 and marvelling at the ridiculous difference in height, weight, musculature and overall shadows cast. Johnson — a voluminous Atlas figure who insisted on competing as a welterweight — had missed weight for the second time in his UFC career, and this time it was a true red flag. People were pissed. When he waxed Yoshida in 41 seconds, the feeling wasn't joyful so much as expected. What, exactly, was Yoshida's path to victory? There wasn't one.

Rabbits don't run over Humvees.

Then Johnson lost to Josh Koscheck less than a month later and everything about Anthony 'Rumble' Johnson felt...just sort of lost. If he was going to whittle himself down from his 225-pound (102 kg) frame to 170 pounds (77 kg), he sure as hell better win. And if he wins, he'd sure as hell better make the weight. It was a bad set-up, but Johnson remained stubborn about it for a long time. Finally, after missing the middleweight maximum (by five kg!) and losing to Vitor Belfort in what ended up being his last-straw fight with the UFC, 'Rumble' finally had his moment of clarity.

It actually occurred on the return flight home from Brazil, when his new coach at the Blackzilians, Henri Hooft, got to pouring out some wine. Johnson and Hooft, through the mystical power of drink, agreed that he should fight as a light heavyweight. He was out of the UFC, so what was there to lose? He would fight in lesser organisations and get some experience in his more natural weight class. He would train well and harness his power. He would eat better. He would stop killing himself in plastic suits and saunas. 'Rumble' would be more humble.

The wine acted as a truth serum.

Flash forward to 2015, and here is Anthony 'Rumble' Johnson back in the UFC after six fights elsewhere. Not only is he back, but he's the next contender to fight Jon Jones for the light heavyweight title. Not only is he fighting for that title, but suddenly he looks like a legitimate threat to end Jones' historic run.

That's quite a turnaround.

Johnson's reimagining as a light heavyweight has been nothing short of remarkable. It is reminiscent of Robbie Lawler's turnaround to become the UFC's welterweight champion after a 1-3 skid as a middleweight. Only it's more remarkable because

Johnson went up two weight classes rather than down one. It speaks to the lunacy of his earlier career. And it speaks to his evolution as a fighter, something that has been a little lost in the narrative.

Think about how it all went down to get an idea. Before UFC 172, Johnson was brought back into the UFC to face Phil Davis. Why? "Because Davis needed an opponent," UFC president Dana White said at the time. Even after winning six in a row, including a heavyweight decision over Andrei Arlovski in WSOF, Johnson was being fed to Davis, who was already taking jabs at Jon Jones to set the table for a future fight. That night in Baltimore, Johnson raised a lot of eyebrows. He not only stood in like an oak and thwarted the takedown attempts, but he punished those attempts with his striking. From the middle of the first round on, Davis was tentative and bewildered. So were we all along press row. The Johnson who returned as a light heavyweight was a maximised version of himself.

He was realised.

His follow-up fight against Antonio Rogerio Nogueira was a showcase in which Johnson unleashed another level of hell on Lil' Nog just 44 seconds into the fight. It all led to a fight with Alexander Gustafsson.

That fight, like the one with Davis, was stacked against him. He travelled to Gustafsson's native Sweden, and was meant to be the warm body that stood between Gustafsson and his rematch with Jones. What did Johnson do? He stormed the gates. He walked right through Gustafsson's range and landed the big shots. Though Gustafsson is considered a dynamic striker — "the best in the division," says his coach Eric del Fierro — he had nothing for Johnson. Within moments of landing a big right hand, it was over. Johnson did in 125 seconds what Jones couldn't do in 25 minutes at UFC 165 — he put Gustafsson away. Gustafsson fell in front of 30,000 of his countrymen.

Just like Yoshida fell over five years earlier, and plenty of others since. Johnson has the ability to beat anybody. The difference is that these days he's no longer beating himself. There's something about that epiphany that stands out in his fights. He's still revelling in the revelation. It's like he found himself along the way, and everything that was wrong before is now in perfect accord.

Now he's a win away from becoming the greatest example of fulfilled potential the UFC has ever known. It's been quite a turnaround. 📌



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**Australian fighting legend  
ADRIAN PANG finally  
returned to the cage in 2015  
after two years of injury and  
limbo left the Queenslander  
on the sidelines. Now,  
following his ONE FC debut at  
Dynasty of Champions, Pang  
is ready for action again.**

BY NEIL ROOKE // PHOTOS COURTESY ONE FC

**B**oarding his plane, Adrian Pang leaves behind a comfortable Australian summer. The temperature sits around the mid-20s, which is a stark contrast to what he is set to endure in Beijing, China as he prepares for his debut with ONE Fighting Championship (ONE FC). It's a cold and bitter winter when the plane lands; it's not ideal for weight cutting by any means, and it certainly doesn't make for the most comfortable conditions to prepare for a fight in.

His father, of Chinese descent, has made the trip over to watch the fight, and the ONE FC experience is a whole new thing for Pang. Having his father watch his return to action after spending almost two years on the sidelines was always going to be a big deal, and while there were never any question marks on whether Pang still had what it took when it came to fighting, there were indeed a few stumbles along the way. Being an experienced fighter, that didn't matter for Pang, though. All that mattered was the fight ahead of him, and while outside the air was cold and the snow began to fall, inside the ONE FC cage, things were just starting to heat up. In front of an electric live crowd and a televised audience that spanned across the globe, Pang put on a show to remember. And he made sure that everyone knew just what he is capable of inside the cage.





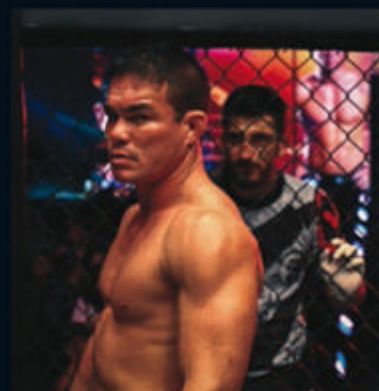
"The weight cut was definitely the hardest part," says Pang. "All the strength training that I've been doing over the years has just seen me get a lot more solid, so I wasn't really carrying any extra weight, I was really lean. Even though I hadn't fought in a while, I wasn't that nervous. The main thing is that because it was my debut I knew that I really had to perform. I think that having my dad there put a lot more pressure on me because I wanted to win for him as well. I had to make a statement for my debut and I had to make a statement for all the fighters back in Australia to show that I am still the best in the country. I believe I showed that I've still got an iron chin and that I can just destroy my way through anyone I want [laughs]."

Being able to show his skills on the world stage again almost didn't come to fruition. During 2012, Pang was the victim of a brutal assault during a celebratory night out. That incident almost saw the end of his fighting career; however, with a full recovery Pang managed to find his way back into the cage to compete again. It had been a long time since he had fought, but he still managed to win in highlight-reel fashion and that was the beginning of his path towards ONE FC.

"After my injury I was out for 18 months and then I fought [Jai] Bradney," Pang says. "And then after that I couldn't get a fight. ONE FC had been trying to sign me for quite some time since I was a Legend [FC] champ. I signed with them and then it took about six months to get a fight. It was just good to fight again. It was really good to get back to that high level international competition and it was good to show that Aussie MMA fighters can do well overseas — it was even better to get the stoppage. It was my first submission win in like seven years [laughs]. I didn't even realise it'd been that long."

It was almost midway through the third and final round of his bout in China that Pang was able to lock in the guillotine choke on Dutchman Vincent Latoel to secure the win. He was tired and running on empty but he continued to push through. As it had many times before, his fighting spirit began to shine through.

"It felt great," Pang says. "I felt pretty heavy in there. I felt like I was a hundred kilos [laughs]. I had a feeling that I was going to catch him with something but it just took time. With his taller body build compared to my stockier build, I was really confident I was going to







catch him. He was a very experienced opponent; he'd had like 30-odd fights, so I knew that there probably wasn't a lot he hadn't seen before. At the same time, I've been doing this for 14 years, so I think my experience inside the cage definitely played a part, too."

With his return to international competition done and dusted, life went back to normal for Pang. It didn't take long for him to seek out a new project shortly after his bout, and it wasn't long until he was back to working hard both inside and outside of the gym. Soon after his fight, plans began to see the Brisbane Integrated MMA location undertake some remodelling that would see it expand to potentially become one of the best facilities in the country.

"We're a self-made gym," Pang says. "For 14 years we've been going and I think it has been about 10 years that we've been doing Integrated MMA where we've all trained together. We've just gotten bigger and bigger. Like I've told people before, in the beginning everything we owned was just in one small box. Now we've got 450 square metres of gym space and everything is all new. We've put down new mats, new wall pads, we've got a new cage coming and our Fairtex boxing ring going back up. Everything is going good and now we'll have our own world-class gym right here in Brisbane."

Now that Pang has had his successful debut with ONE FC, the question begs as to what will be next for the 37-year-old. Many fans, along with the international media, have suggested that Pang should be the next fighter to challenge the ONE FC lightweight champion for the belt; however, Pang isn't as quick to put his name at the top of the surging ONE FC lightweight division.

"I've just gotta take it one fight at a time," Pang says. "Because I have been out for so long, I feel that I've really gotta earn my place and my shot at a title. I don't wanna be one of those guys who is just given a title shot, I wanna go through and fight the best guys and beat them and then have my chance. But I'm busting to get back in there. After that one I definitely don't wanna wait a long time again 'cause the clock's ticking for me [laughs]. A lot of people are talking about me going up against Koji Ando. I think that Koji has done enough to earn his shot at the title, so I think I'll be having another fight before they match me with him. There are a ton of fights in there that would be great and match up with my style. I'm hoping to fight in the middle of the year." 🇹🇼







# A PROMISE FULFILLED

**In his UFC debut, bantamweight Cody Garbrandt defeated Marcus Brimage via third-round TKO at UFC 182. But that victory couldn't compare to the bigger picture he'd painted over the previous four years.**

BY HUNTER HOMISTEK // PHOTOS BY SHOOTITMMA.COM / @MMASHOOTER

Cody 'No Love' Garbrandt wheeled eight-year-old Maddux Maple around the MGM Grand Hotel & Casino early Saturday morning, 3 January. Playfully, Garbrandt turned Maple's wheelchair into a motocross bike, popping wheelies and zipping around the arena's hallways with unbridled enthusiasm. The two laughed as they played.

Later that evening, Garbrandt would make Maple cry.

'No Love' first met Maple as an amateur fighter competing on the local Ohio circuits, where, at the request of his brother, Zach, he raised funds for the Maple family before a fight against Jerrell Hodge in February of 2012 at NAAFS: Caged Vengeance 10. Growing up in Tuscarawas County, Ohio, everybody knows everybody, and Zach heard of Maple's fight against cancer. He knew Cody's upcoming fight would provide a nice platform to educate the town on the matter.

Introductions were made. Bonds were formed.

From there, the relationship between Garbrandt and Maple took shape, and suddenly, the bad-boy lifelong fighter with tattoos lining his flesh from neck to ankle found himself learning a lesson in combat from a five-year-old boy. From their first nervous encounter to their Supercross hot lap around the MGM Grand, Garbrandt absorbed a speed course in humility, in strength, and in the power of human will.

"That little kid's been through so much," Garbrandt said. "He lost out on a lot of life. He didn't get to do a lot of things regular children did. I remember the first time meeting me,

he just touched me, man. He had a little smile on his face, he had no hair, he was going through chemo, he was a few months into it. But every time I came to his house, every time he talked to me, he'd get a little smile on his face."

In less than four years alongside Maple, Garbrandt transitioned from a life of crime and desperation to a life under the bright lights of the UFC Octagon. During the same stretch, Maple forced his cancer into remission. Their simultaneous reversal of fortune is no coincidence. They forged a symbiotic relationship of love and welded it together with a promise.

"He just told me, 'Cody, I'm going to beat cancer,'" Garbrandt said. "And I said, 'I know you are, buddy, and I'm going to get to the UFC and I'm going to win. You're not in this fight alone.'"

At an age when most kids are concerned with playground shenanigans and chicken nuggets, Maple was trapped in a steel cage, tossing haymakers in an effort to preserve his life. He never gave up, and he won.

With an entire county and more behind him, Garbrandt continued his winning ways, too. Five straight knockouts as a pro earned him a shot at UFC 182 against Brimage, the former *The Ultimate Fighter* competitor coming off a ferocious first-round head-kick knockout victory over Jumabieke Tuerxun at UFC Fight Night: Rockhold vs Bisping.

Garbrandt's moment arrived. Maple made good on his promise, and now he sat in Section 216, waving a flag with '9-2-2' (the county's area code) written on it with wild passion and excitement, cheering on his hero.

"I hear the crowd. I see the fans," Garbrandt said.

"Lights. There's the Octagon. There's my battlefield.

"I walk out and I see section 216, where a bunch of my hometown fans and supporters are sitting," Garbrandt said. "I look and I turn to my left and I hear the 9-2-2 chant from section 216 where they're all at."

There's Maddux. There's his flag.

"He waves the 9-2-2 flag every time he walks me to the cage," Garbrandt said. "I saw that flag just waving like crazy. He was whipping it back and forth real hard. I could tell how excited he was from how hard that flag was waving."

"It gave me a nice, weird tingle down my spine. It was like, 'This is my time to keep my promise to him. I'm here.'"

From the bout's onset, it was clear Garbrandt belonged. The Team Alpha Male standout landed crisp combinations at will, picking his spots and avoiding damage in the process. Save a few low blows — which were met with blistering chants of "9-2-2" from Section 216 — Garbrandt emerged from the first five minutes of his UFC career unscathed and supremely confident.

Ten minutes later, his hand was raised in the centre of the Octagon. A crisp two-three-two rake-hook combination put Brimage on skates in the waning moments of Round 3, and 'No Love' sealed the deal, forcing a referee stoppage shortly thereafter.

The win was monumental. For Garbrandt, it signified a lofty achievement. It sealed a promise, and even in the wake of the biggest win of his career, Maple was on his mind.





// PHOTO BY JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA-USA TODAY SPORTS

"There's a little boy out here, since he was five years old, he's been battling leukemia, and he promised me years ago, three-and-a-half years ago, he'd beat leukemia," Garbrandt told UFC commentator Joe Rogan in his post-fight Octagon interview. "And I promised him I'd make it to the UFC and win, and right here he is, he's in section 216...Maddux Maple, I love you, buddy. This one's for you."

Garbrandt found Maple immediately. After being whisked backstage by officials for a litany of post-fight tests, interviews, and check-ups, Garbrandt recalls an encounter with his muse, the eight-year-old with a flag and a promise.

"I see Maddux down there, they let him down to the first section, and he's crying," Garbrandt said. "He had tears rolling down his face. I held back a bunch of mine. I've seen him in tears of pain and everything, but those were happy tears, you know? Just to see those coming down his face, I told him, 'Hey, man, we did it.' And he told me he loved me."

"That was even more special than winning the fight... You can have that gold title, that world title, and have it collecting dust, but changing people's lives and making memories with them, that's what I'll hold on to when I'm retired."

Before leaving Las Vegas, Maple left Garbrandt with a gift, an Apple iPhone.

Maple uses Apple products, and with Garbrandt being stuck with an out-of-date Android phone, he wanted his hero to be more readily accessible.

"He was like, 'Man, Cody's always on his phone, so now every time he has his phone, he'll think of me,'" Garbrandt said. "That's just how amazing that little kid is. He knows he can't see me all the time, but he just wants me to know he does love me."

Now, Garbrandt looks to use his experience with Maple to inspire even more of those blue-collar warriors populating Tuscarawas County. Garbrandt's hometown overflows with people just like his 2010 self, and 'No Love' wants to change that unfortunate reality.

"Giving back to the kids and being a hero, a role model for them, is huge," Garbrandt said. "A role model is something I searched for my whole life. I didn't have a role model. I love my mum, but my mum is my mum. She was my hero, but a role model would be someone like myself who came and beat the odds."

"I remember what it's like to be a kid. I remember when a high school football player said 'Hi' to me or a wrestler said 'Hi' to me. It pumps you up. It felt good. So I know what they feel like, and it's an honour to be their


role model... I've been knocked down many times in life, but I've never stayed down. I never will until I'm six feet under."

While Garbrandt's immediate future remains unclear — he's looking for a fight and he loves a matchup with Brad Pickett but negotiations aren't underway just yet — his present communicates sans interference.

Cody Garbrandt, 23 years old, 1-0 as a UFC bantamweight, defied the odds. He emerged from a withering small town and left behind a seed of hope and promise. With his win over Brimage, he gave that seed a little water.

The tears that streaked down Maple's face post-UFC 182 fed it further.

Now, expect that seed to blossom. Garbrandt has visions — he's always had visions — and they just keep coming true. Now, he sees success inside the Octagon, he sees gold, and he sees a continued friendship with one Maddux Maple.

"Maybe 10 years down the road, I'm 30-some years old, I'm world champion at this time, and we're sitting at dinner, I have the UFC belt, and I just say, 'Hey, man, you don't understand, this belt's here, and you have a lot to do with it,'" Garbrandt said. "You have a lot to do with me becoming the champion of the world." 



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# BACK IN THE GAME

**For Neil Magny, a pair of losses in 2013 wasn't the end of his UFC career, it was the start of a blistering new run.**

BY TRENT REINSMITH // PHOTOS BY PAUL THATCHER

**Y**ear 2013 was not the best year of Neil Magny's professional fighting career.

It started out well enough, with a unanimous decision victory over Jon Manley in his UFC debut, but things went downhill from there. In his next two fights, Magny tapped to a Sergio Moraes triangle choke and dropped a unanimous decision to Seth Baczynski. Two losses in a row for a relative newcomer to the UFC. Things were not looking good.

The November 2013 loss to Baczynski saw doubt begin to creep into Magny's mind, and rightfully so. The unwritten rule with the UFC is that once a fighter hits three consecutive losses, they more often than not are in line for a demotion. Or to be more blunt, shown the door and forced to find employment with another less well-known fight organisation.

With that knowledge ricocheting around inside his head, Magny began to wonder about his future. As 2014 neared, he debated if a career as a mixed martial artist was the right path for him or if he should go to his fall-back plan, using his BA in Criminal Justice from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville to pursue a career in law enforcement. Magny said those doubts became strong enough that he went so far as to take an exam for a position with the Denver Police Department.

Eventually, his desire to fight prevailed, and putting those uncertainties aside, Magny refocused on pursuing

his dream — to become a contender in the UFC. Magny said he thought, "Whatever happens happens, and God will provide for me and take care of me." He was not going to allow fear to freeze him. He was not going to worry about anything other than getting better as a fighter. He was going to focus on training, put his faith in God, and believe that things were going to work out for the best.

Back on form and dishing out the damage, Magny ended 2014 by becoming just the second fighter in UFC history to win five consecutive fights in a calendar year.

Magny's path to the UFC had inauspicious beginnings.

After spending the first 12 years of his life in New York, Magny's family moved to Chicago, where the junior high student started to run with the wrong crowd. Magny said of those times, "There was a lot of gang activity and things like that I was starting to get involved in."

Like many young men before him, Magny found his salvation in sports — namely wrestling. Magny recalled of his days in the Thornwood, Illinois, High School wrestling room, "The coach that I was fortunate enough to have in high school was the guy that taught me all about faith and love outside of working hard and continuing to pursue your dreams. He had a huge influence on me at the time."

Another man who influenced Magny was former WEC bantamweight champion Miguel Torres. Magny and two

friends happened to walk into World Gym in Hammond, Indiana, to do some weightlifting when Magny spotted Torres in the corner of the gym teaching a jiu-jitsu class. Intrigued by what he saw, Magny ventured over and tried his hand with grappling.

In short order, Torres asked the young interloper if he had ever trained before. Magny answered to the negative and was invited to spar with Torres — an offer he accepted, and, to hear Magny tell it, the brief encounter was a memorable learning experience. “I just threw on a pair of gloves and stepped on the mat thinking it was going to be something easy. I just walked in there with no mouthpiece and started sparring with Miguel. For a guy that weighs 145 pounds (66 kg), he hits pretty hard.”

Bitten by the fighting bug, Magny’s training did not stop when he joined the army after graduating high school. While stationed overseas during his two tours during Operation Iraqi Freedom, Magny found like-minded individuals who had experience in various martial arts. When done with their duties for the day, the small group would meet up and train each other in their respective techniques.

After returning stateside, Magny took that training with him when he joined the Illinois National Guard and Illinois Combative Team, earning a third-place finish in the 2010 Army Combatives Championship. Magny would become an Army National Guard Combatives champion the following year, winning the cruiserweight competition.

It was during his time with the National Guard that Magny joined the cast of season 16 of *The Ultimate Fighter*. As part of Shane Carwin’s team during the reality show, Magny made it to the semifinals that season, defeating Cameron Diffley and Bristol Marunde before falling to Mike Ricci via first-round knockout.

It was while living in the *TUF* house that Magny made the acquaintance of UFC veteran Nate Marquardt. As a jiu-jitsu coach on Team Carwin, Marquardt saw something special in Magny during their time together on the show and invited him to move to Colorado to train with him. “I saw a few things,” Marquardt said of Magny. “Number one was his character. He was a very humble, good guy. He was trustworthy, hard working and talented. He just had a lot of good traits, and he just seemed like the total package.”

The call from Marquardt came when Magny, fresh off his stint on *TUF*, had come to the realisation that he had outgrown his training in Illinois and needed to move to a new gym to further his development as a fighter. California and Florida were on Magny’s radar, but Colorado was not. “Right after the show (*TUF*), Nate called me up and said, ‘Hey, if you’re serious about wanting to move, you can come out to Colorado and stay with me for however long you need to and just go from there.’ At first I thought, ‘Man, I can’t go to Colorado. I can’t just leave my job, leave my family and just go,’ but I thought about it for a week or so (then) packed up my car, gave everything away and headed out west to Colorado, and it was pretty much the best decision I could have made.”

Neil Magny eats shots from Seth Baczynski on his way to a submission loss at UFC Fight Night 31.






Neil Magny rains punches down on William Macario during UFC 179 at Ginasio do Maracanazinho.



PHOTO BY JASON SILVA-USA TODAY SPORTS

There was an adjustment period for Magny and his coaches following the move to Colorado, something that Eliot Marshall, Elevation Fight Team's Brazilian jiu-jitsu coach, acknowledged. "He came to Colorado right after (*TUF*). He had a fight right away. He won that one, but didn't show a lot of improvement. He then lost his next two. It takes time for coaches and a fighter to blend and that's really all I think that was. We got used to him and he got used to us."

Once the team all got on the same page, Magny embarked on his current run of five straight victories. Marshall was quick to give the bulk of the credit for that streak to Magny himself. "Neil has shown us a lot of growth. We as coaches can only take so much credit. Most of it goes to Neil and his hard work. The things that I try to focus on the most with him are basics. I think strong fundamentals are the key to high-level grappling and its application in MMA. When Neil isn't in camp, I try to get him grappling with guys that are better than him so that he can improve."

Despite winning five fights in 2014, Magny, who became a full-time fighter in early 2014 when his National Guard service came to an end, has yet to break into the top 15 in the UFC's welterweight division or crack the main card line-up on a UFC fight card. That's fine with the 14-3 fighter. "It's more motivating," Magny said of his under-the-radar status. "I honestly believe the only way to get better at fighting is just by doing it, so the more time I have in the cage and test myself as a fighter, the better for me. Once I get to the point where I'm able to start testing some of the guys that are in the top 15 in the UFC, I'll just be there to stay. There might be guys that have one big year, and then you forget about them, so I can concentrate building on this year, and just carry it on to the next fight. Once that time comes where I can fight bigger-name guys, I don't want to lose and have (people) forget about me. I want to fight and have people say, 'Oh wow, this kid's pretty impressive, where did he come from?'" 



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# BALANCING ACT

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## Arlene Blencowe

**Former women's World IBA boxing champion and Aussie MMA stand-out Arlene Blencowe recently became the first Australian female to be signed to fight for Bellator MMA.**

BY NEIL ROOKE // PHOTOS BY LINDA

**T**he dial on the speedometer bounces between 110 and 120 clicks; heat from the blaring sun radiates on the hood of the car as the air conditioner circulates as much cold air as possible. It's a comfortable enough drive; its has to be for the amount of times that Arlene Blencowe does it. The Pacific Motorway, which is the pathway between Sydney and Newcastle, has a steady flow of traffic. That always seems to be the case; the traffic never really stops.

As the radio plays its daily rotation of top-10 hits, all that is going through Blencowe's mind is getting home. Each and every time she makes the trip it's

all that she can think about. She misses her two kids, she misses the calm Mid North Coast. It's just a few short hours away, and a detour from her current destination of Newcastle could make that trip even shorter.

World champions aren't prone to taking shortcuts, though. Taking shortcuts is not how Blencowe won her two boxing world titles, and taking shortcuts isn't what helped Blencowe begin to flourish as a mixed martial artist. While it may be a hard thing to think about, the fact is that her kids — her life — just have to wait. It's all about sacrifice for Blencowe, and perhaps more so it's about the rewards that just keep coming.



"When I first started out with boxing it was just about chasing a dream," Blencowe says. "It was about being able to represent Australia and go to an Olympics and a Commonwealth Games. But I've never done anything in life that has pushed me like this and even more so, now that I have started MMA, it's so ridiculously hard and it tests me both mentally and physically every single day.

"I've just learnt so much about myself. There was a day a while ago where I'd just done two training sessions that day and I'd been up since 4:40am, I was ridiculously tired and all I wanted to do was drive home and see my kids because I hadn't seen them for five days. I was supposed to stop at Newcastle to do a double session there with my coaches and the whole time from Sydney to Newcastle on the two-hour drive I was thinking, 'I should just drive through; the coaches would understand' because they understand I train hard and that I've got commitments with the kids. I just came up with all these excuses as to why I shouldn't do it but then I pulled straight in, went to training and had an awesome session."

For Blencowe, the time that she spends travelling back and forth along the Pacific Motorway is the perfect time for her to reflect. As a hard-working mother, a fighter and a personal trainer, there is always something going on in her mind and for some people there would be many excuses on why not to train. Blencowe doesn't let anything discourage her, and she knows that she has a completely different fight that will often take place long before she even actually has the chance to compete.

"There are little voices inside your head and you're constantly fighting and you're pushing yourself and you're digging deep — these are all the little battles that you go through before you even step into the cage," Blencowe says. "When you step in there and you've got that whole thing of testing yourself and finding your will and pushing yourself and coming up against an opponent that has done the exact same thing as you, it's just an amazing experience."

It's hard enough being a professional fighter. Add onto that what it takes to be a mother of two and for a lot of people it would all get too much. Sure, Blencowe has her days when she questions why she does what she does, but like any high-calibre athlete, she pushes through, and knows just what she needs to do to get the job done.



"I'M A SINGLE  
MUM WITH  
TWO KIDS AND  
THEY ARE,  
AND ALWAYS  
HAVE BEEN, MY  
NUMBER-ONE  
PRIORITY."



"Balance for me is really important," Blencowe says. "I'm a single mum with two kids and they are, and always have been, my number-one priority. I'm really thorough with everything I do with them, and because I am one of those mums, I find it hard to be thorough as well as be an elite athlete. Obviously it's really rewarding too; they're growing up, they are 13 and seven now, and I just see the amazing things they are learning from me being a strong mum, who by herself is still achieving everything she wants to do and living the fighter lifestyle. It's hard work doing what I do, I don't work a nine-to-five job, I'm pursuing a dream that I'm passionate about and I'm able to give it 100 per cent and still make things work for my family. It's hard, and I have my days. Since the start of January, I've been in full fight camp with training, dieting and everything, and that can take its toll on an athlete by itself, and then you've got the kids and work commitments as well as trying to make everything work financially to be able to pay for it all

and it's tough, but at the same time it's really rewarding."

With a three-fight winning streak to her name, Blencowe was able to secure a contract with Bellator MMA, the second biggest mixed martial arts company in North America, and arguably, also the second biggest in the world. Blencowe became the first Australian woman ever to be signed to the company, and it was yet again proof that eventually, hard work always pays off.

"I was over the moon," Blencowe says. "Bellator as a company is something that I was more aware of over Invicta [FC]. Invicta was a promotion that I had learnt about when I started getting into MMA because I'd seen Bec Rawlings, Fiona Muxlow and Alex Chambers fighting on it. I knew they were the stepping stone to the UFC but I'd been watching Bellator for years, so it was really good to get signed to such a big promotion. Everyone keeps asking me now, 'once your contract is up with them, will you be using that as a path to the UFC?' and stuff like that, but I'd be more than happy for my career to stay





with Bellator — I recognise them as a big fight promotion and I'm very lucky and thankful to be signed with them."

Not long after signing her contract with Bellator there was an opportunity for Blencowe to step up on short notice to expedite her debut. In the past that would have been something she would have jumped at the chance to do, but with the stakes a little bit higher now, patience is going to be the key to Blencowe's success on the world stage.

"This is the big-time," she says.

"That's a reason why I don't want to take fights on short notice or anything like that. For me to be fighting on Bellator now, I'm going to be recognised as an MMA fighter and an athlete, so I want to be stepping out on the big stage like that at my 100 per cent best. I don't want to be umming and ahing and I don't want to risk the chance of a bad performance because I wasn't prepared properly."

**"I'VE TAKEN ALL MY FIGHTS LIKE THEY ARE THE HARDEST FIGHTS OF MY CAREER."**

All of Blencowe's mixed martial arts bouts have taken place in Australia, and to her credit, back in 2013 she even fought three times in the one night. With her one-night tournament experience behind her, Blencowe went on to win her next three fights all by way of stoppage, and in the process she derailed the undefeated streak of Storm Damage featherweight champion Faith Van Duin. Although her opportunity on the world stage under the Bellator banner is yet another big step up in competition for her, Blencowe isn't letting the perceived pressure of her international debut change her mindset.

"I've taken all my fights like they are the hardest fights of my career," Blencowe says. "That's one of the reasons I think I won one of the world title fights in boxing, I didn't let it all get to me much, it was just another fight and I was just going there to fight. That's kind of how I'm taking it with Bellator, too. I know it's a huge opportunity and it's one of the biggest things to happen to me. My career is



finally doing what I want it to do but I don't want to get overwhelmed with it all."

Even though her sights are firmly set on mixed martial arts for the near future, Blencowe hasn't closed the door entirely on boxing. Having success in both sports isn't going to be an easy feat, but true to her nature, Blencowe is always up for a challenge.

"In the past, when I first started in MMA, I stepped back from the boxing scene and focused a lot more on my ground game and picked up on areas in my fight game that were lacking," she says. "I found that my striking actually deteriorated, so what I've done now is I've maintained what I have been doing with my boxing and incorporated more

sessions with the ground game. Training three times a day gives me the full range of everything I need to cover.

"I am still looking at pursuing my boxing career. I still have the goals that I want to achieve; I've got a bucket list a mile long that will probably take me into another lifetime [laughs]. At this stage what I'm doing for 2015 is just waiting for my first fight with Bellator to be done. After that, I'm hoping to step straight into the boxing ring in early May. The number-one priority for me this year is Bellator and then, providing I'm not injured or anything, stepping straight into the boxing ring and having a few non-title fights — some four or six rounders to keep me active, and then we'll see what happens from there." 

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# NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

**Ray Sefo and the World Series of Fighting are hanging tough.**

BY DUANE FINLEY

Things move quickly on the modern landscape of mixed martial arts and even quicker for those who are at the helm of entertaining the legions of faithful fight fans. World Series of Fighting is still relatively new to the ranks of major promotions in combat sports, but the Ray Sefo-led operation has made quite a splash over the past two years.

From broadcasting their events on television giant NBC Sports to crafting a roster filled with established names and up-and-coming talent alike, WSOF showed from the jump they were here to stay. Due to the surging popularity of

what has become a global sport over the past 10 years, everywhere fight fans turn there is a new promotion sprouting up. That said, in order to gain any type of traction with the action-hungry masses, an organisation has to get a grasp on the complex animal that is delivering exciting live events, and then hit the mark with tremendous frequency every time out.

That is a task few have been capable of accomplishing, and WSOF had the correct formula for success from the get go.

"It's been a lot of hard work," Sefo said. "We started out with a dream and

a vision and slowly those things are shaping up to be reality. I've been in martial arts and fighting for most of my life and knew getting talent and putting on a show was the easy part. The tough part was going to get a television network to broadcast our events, and that happened with NBC. That was a big part of the puzzle and dream that all came together. Starting this promotion would have been really tough to be in the market without a network, and having NBC, NBC Sports and IMG as partners is a dream come true."

Just like the action inside the cage, outside, MMA business is undoubtedly





**WE STARTED OUT WITH  
A DREAM AND A VISION  
AND SLOWLY THOSE  
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TO BE REALITY."**

a 'dog-eat-dog' environment. That said, WSOF is doing more than just surviving. With a handful of cards still remaining on the calendar, the organisation is thriving in 2015. And with a projected move into the pay-per-view market in the coming year, the future looks even brighter for the upstart turned contender.

Yet, even with ambitious plans on the table for the next year's campaign, Sefo and company are making sure to keep things moving at their pace. Plenty of promotions before them have jumped into the deep end of the pool too quickly and died a brutal,

**Marlon Moraes defeats  
Cody Bollinger at WSOF 13**







WSOF president Ray Sefo sits cageside at WSOF

public death at the hands of falling trends and inflated contracts. MMA history is littered with flash-in-the-pan shows and WSOF is determined to not repeat the mistakes so many others have committed.

There is no shortage of ambition where WSOF is concerned, but the organisation has no qualms with making progress one step at a time.

"In terms of moving forward and growth, there is so much that is in the works right now," Sefo explained. "We feel like we are improving every single time we have a show. We made history right out of the gate with our first show being on a major sports network. We made history again in July with our show being on the NBC mothership and we had another one in November. It's been a lot of hard work but it's something I'm very passionate about and love to do.

"Moving into pay-per-view is something we've been talking about for a while now. But again, we are

moving forward at the rate we can afford to expand at. Right now we are in 90 countries all over the world thanks to our partner IMG. We just had a show in Canada and we are looking to go global in 2015. There are definitely some big things in the works for next year."

With WSOF having the major aspects of their delivery system locked down, the next major element is making sure the product they are putting on display is top quality. Where big-name talent is typically what pushes viewers to fight cards, it is marketable prospects that ultimately aid in the longevity department. In that particular regard, WSOF has been firing on all cylinders as two homegrown fighters, Marlon Moraes and Justin Gaethje, have not only become champions in their respective divisions, but have garnered buzz from the MMA community in the process.

Sefo is extremely satisfied with the talent his promotion has landed thus far and has every intention of

discovering more future stars as his company continues their global push in the future.

"I'm very excited with the talent we have," Sefo said. "I've always said the world at large is a huge place and there is so much more talent out there. We are trying to go global and build more fighters like Marlon Moraes and Justin Gaethje. Another example is David Branch. He's a guy who was kind of under the radar for a while but has racked up five straight wins and has become our middleweight champion. He's defending his title against Yushin Okami who is a legend in the game. We also have the number one ranked strawweight in the world in our champion Jessica Aguilar. These are all people we are very happy and proud to have, but they are fighters the next generation looks up to and admires. We are going to continue to grow young talents and build our roster going forward." 📌

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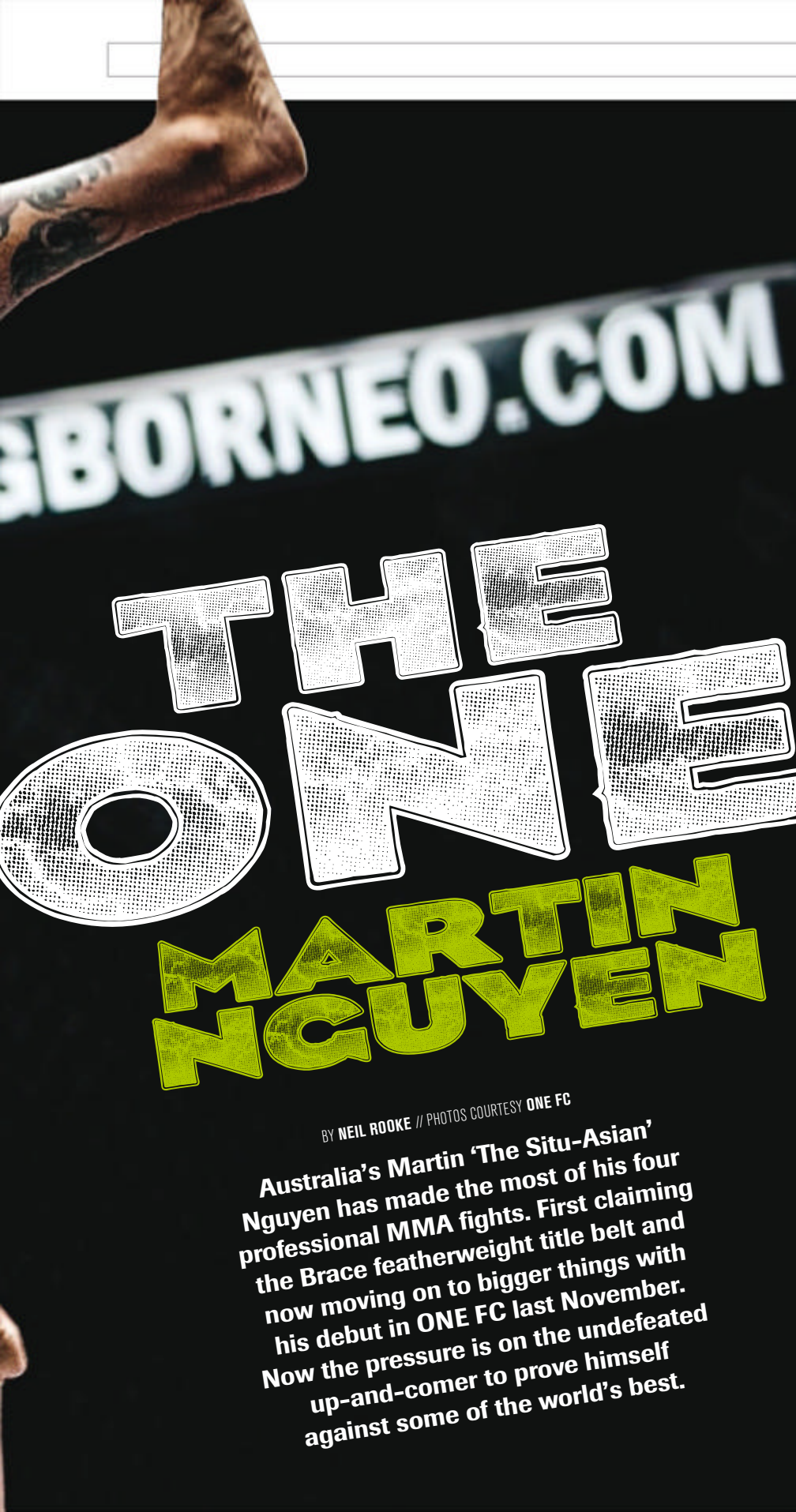
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BY NEIL ROOKE // PHOTOS COURTESY ONE FC

**Australia's Martin 'The Situ-Asian' Nguyen has made the most of his four professional MMA fights. First claiming the Brace featherweight title belt and now moving on to bigger things with his debut in ONE FC last November. Now the pressure is on the undefeated up-and-comer to prove himself against some of the world's best.**

Three-and-a-half minutes.

That's the amount of time that it took for Martin Nguyen's life to change forever. On a warm November night in 2013, an action-packed night of fights was drawing to a close in Australia's capital of Canberra. Two undefeated prospects were squaring off with the Brace featherweight title on the line. After some back-and-forth, Nguyen secured a takedown and followed it up by teeing off with some of his signature ground-and-pound, which saw the referee step in and call a stop to the bout. With his arm raised in the middle of the cage, Nguyen was handed a stack of paper. It was a life-changing contract with ONE Fighting Championship.

Right there, after those three-and-a-half minutes of work, he was handed what was set to be his ticket to fighting in Asia. It was an opportunity that he had often thought about, but certainly not something he expected quite yet with only three professional fights to his name. Nguyen was set to continue his career in a region where mixed martial arts was beginning to experience growth like never before. When it came to fighting professionally, for Nguyen, nothing was ever going to be the same again.

"It was a dream come true," Nguyen says. "I was really overwhelmed. I almost started crying [laughs]. After I won the fight I was so happy, I just wanted to get everyone in to the cage so that we could take a photo, but Kya [Pate, Brace CEO] told me to wait and I thought, 'wow, this is getting pretty serious' [laughs]. He waited a bit and that's when he



announced that I'd been signed to ONE FC. It was a huge surprise. The fight had been hyped up a fair bit but I never expected that to happen, not in a million years. I never thought that it would happen so soon. That's the kind of thing that we work for as fighters — to be able to fight on such a big stage. This is the big league now and I plan to go out there and make the most of it. I have been working hard to get to where I am and I don't plan on stopping now. It's exciting and it's my chance to continue to build my brand and be seen by a huge audience all over the world.

"Signing the contract, I was really over the moon. I wouldn't have chosen any other organisation in the world, even if they put out the platter for me. With ONE FC, when I did make my debut, the whole thing was just so professional and compared to any event I've ever been to over here, it was just so different. Everything they did from when you arrived, to the hotel rooms to the photo shoots and video shoots and with all the interviews — it all just ran so smoothly, everything was really perfect."

With Brace being part of ONE FC's worldwide network, winning

**WITH BRACE BEING PART OF ONE FC'S WORLDWIDE NETWORK, WINNING THE FEATHERWEIGHT TITLE WAS THE PERFECT STEPPING STONE FOR NGUYEN TO FURTHER HIS VERY YOUNG CAREER.**

the featherweight title was the perfect stepping stone for Nguyen to further his very young career. And chasing after that kind of stepping stone is something that he would recommend for all up-and-coming fighters. All around Australia there are fighters working tirelessly every day to get their opportunity to fight internationally, and with so many fighters all vying for their own opportunities, it's always going to be important for them to make a good first impression well before they get their big chance.

"You've gotta put your head down and work hard," Nguyen says. "You've

also gotta be humble, you can't let your ego get ahead of you. You also gotta perform your best every time you hit that cage because you've only got the chance to do it one time when you get in there, and with that, if they want ya, they want ya, it's all about making an impression and being able to perform all the time."

Nguyen's first fight under the ONE FC banner took place on 7 November, 2014 in Singapore, where he came up against previously undefeated prospect Rocky Batolbatol, who had won five fights in a row. Nguyen took the fight on short notice and impressed with a second-round

Nguyen punishes Rocky Batolbatol at ONE FC 22



submission victory to extend his own undefeated streak. The victory saw the 25-year-old make a great first impression for his new employers, and it was an experience that he will certainly always remember.

"It was a bit nerve-racking at the start," Nguyen admits. "I was pretty confident going in because I'd been training so that I could fly out if there was going to be a short-notice fight, so it worked out well. Everything played out the way that we wanted it to and I was very happy with it. There was a lot of pressure on me for taking the fight on shorter notice and also being undefeated and people in the crowd not really knowing who I was; the Filipino guys are pretty well loved in Singapore as well. In my head I was just telling myself 'he's not even that good', but that was just my ego talking [laughs]. A lot of people were talking him up before the fight, so that put a little bit more pressure on me as well.

"There is always that pressure of when you go into a fight undefeated. You've just gotta fight through it and fight your game as per normal and whatever they throw at you, you throw back harder. You've just gotta work in there to get your hand raised — that's what I always work for, I work for the

finish. I think you always have a little bit of pressure before you get in there but once you step into that cage, you overcome it pretty quickly with the crowd cheering and all of that and then it becomes about getting the job done."

Something that would prove to be a whole new experience for Nguyen leading up to his debut was the pre-fight atmosphere in Singapore. Heading into the bout as a relatively unknown fighter from Australia who was stepping up on short notice, Nguyen didn't exactly expect to have the attention of fans, but sure enough, people wanted to get their photo taken with the 'Situ-Asian', and the whole experience just became even more surreal, but all the extra attention isn't something that Nguyen is going to let go to his head.

"I think it was because I was a little bit different. I'm Australian, and with my swagger and hairdo and my nickname, people were just interested. My family and my team at KMA are keeping me level headed," Nguyen says. "I've got a lot more fans and I've gotta be a lot more careful with things that I say and do on social media. My lifestyle is still the same, I've still got the same friendship circle, so none of that is really gonna



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Nguyen claiming victory at ONE FC 22



change, I’m just getting hungrier for it all really [laughs].”

Almost a year had passed between Nguyen’s last two fights, and being more active in 2015 is at the top of the priority list for the Sydney-based fighter. Nguyen has eyed fighting at least twice this year and will take on whatever challenge is thrown his way. For the young up-and-coming fighter it’s not so much about protecting his undefeated record, it’s about shooting to the top — and staying there.

“I’ve been petitioning to get back in [laughs], I’ve been training hard during the Christmas ‘off-season’,” Nguyen says. “I weighed around 76 kilos on New Year’s Eve, so I had let myself go a bit but a few weeks after that I messaged [ONE FC matchmaker] Matt Hume and told him that I was 70 kilos on the dot and ready to go. Whether it was short notice or long notice, I didn’t care, I just wanted them to know that I was ready to fight again and now I am ready to go and do it all over again.

“No matter who they put me in there against, I’m gonna go in there and fight my fight. I fight to finish and I fight to impress. I’m ready to make my statement and continue to show the ONE FC fans my style. Every time I go into a fight I go in thinking that I am gonna leave with my hand raised — there is no doubt about that. Every single time that I enter that cage you can expect a good, fun fight and hopefully this year there’s gonna be a whole lot more opportunities for me to show that.” 



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# HK CLOTHING

## Michael Prokos

### Before we get started, tell us a bit about yourself. How did you become involved in the industry?

I had a passion for the arts from a very young age and began training under Sam Greco when he had his dojo on Sydney Rd, Brunswick. After a short stint under Sam, I moved to the Fitzroy Stars, training under the late master Dana Goodson. I spent a few years there before training in the art of aikido under Joe Thambu. I stopped training when my mother fell terminally ill and only recently began training again and took on the FightFit Challenge under the guidance of Paul Fyfield and won my fight via second round TKO. And now my own two boys are training at Brizzi Brothers boxing gym.

### What can you tell us about the origins of your business? Is there an interesting story behind this endeavour?

Approximately five to six years ago, I unfortunately became homeless with my two young sons. It was one of the darkest and most challenging periods of my life. Life is pretty hard as a single parent but to then become homeless compounded it tenfold. HK Clothing was born out of the hardships endured while living on the streets. The hardships and challenges endured during this very difficult and dark period have been embraced to give others the strength and will to succeed. HK Clothing represents resilience, toughness and encompasses the various strengths required to stand up and achieve (mental, emotional, physical and psychological). The mental strength required to succeed in life is no different to the mental strength required to succeed in the ring. Hence why HK Clothing is a martial arts-inspired and lifestyle apparel brand.

### What inspired you to start it?

While on the streets, I met many young children and young adults in a similar predicament. It really touched me deeply to see so many people struggle and lost in their ways. HK Clothing is a means for me to put back into the community. We donate to various charity organisations that



Michael's sons training at Brizzi Brothers

assist vulnerable and isolated young people with the intent to improve their pathways to accommodation, employment and education. In addition, and through sponsorship, we support young athletes in pursuit of their dreams, aspirations and goals in the combative sports.

### Why do you think it has been so successful?

Success has come through our genuine passion and commitment in driving the HK Clothing brand. The quality of our products are a true reflection of our brand and ethos. We are not merely selling apparel with our logo on them, but rather selling and promoting a brand that has genuine substance and meaning. A brand that will entrench itself in the combative sports. Our mission is twofold. To provide quality apparel at affordable prices and to give our athletes the exposure and support they deserve.

### What does your company offer that others don't? What sets you apart?

Our customers and people in general can relate to us. Life isn't easy and we have all experienced some degree of difficulty, misfortune or struggled through some difficult and trying times. HK Clothing is no different. In fact, it was born out of adversity and through my personal struggles. It's something that we can all relate to. The HK logo is a symbol of this challenge that we all face throughout our lives.

As mentioned earlier, HK Clothing represents resilience, toughness and encompasses the various strengths required to stand up and achieve. It's about that fighting spirit in all of us.

### Do you have any stories of a happy customer/ someone your business has changed or inspired?

The HK Clothing story itself has proven to be a major inspiration for all people who have come into contact with our business. They are amazed by what we have been able to achieve in such a short period of time. It truly is an inspirational story.

### Tell us a little about any sponsored athletes.

We currently sponsor two professional boxers in Marcos 'El Matador' Amado and Joel 'CamaKo' Camilleri. Marcos was the recipient of the 2014 ANBF Victoria's Most Courageous award for his efforts in China. Marcos's next fight is against Ben Harvie on 27 March at Malvern Town Hall. Joel is scheduled to fight Adrian Campbell on 20 March at the Melbourne Pavilion. In addition, we sponsor two amateur boxers: Stevo Dugec (Peninsula Boxing) and Jack Denahy (Brawl Australia, Ballarat).

### What does the future hold for your business?

To continue to grow our brand, support our athletes and to move into other disciplines of combat sports such as Muay Thai and MMA.

### Anything else you would like to add?

In addition to our sponsored athletes, we have sponsored the HK Clothing 2014 Lionel Rose Cup and the 2014 Aus-Boxing HK Fight of the Year. Looking forward to a big 2015. 🏆

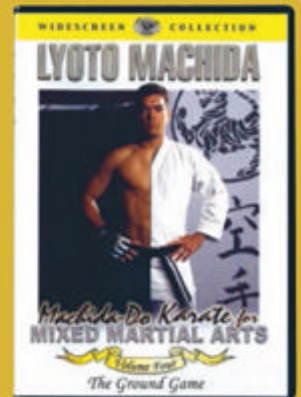
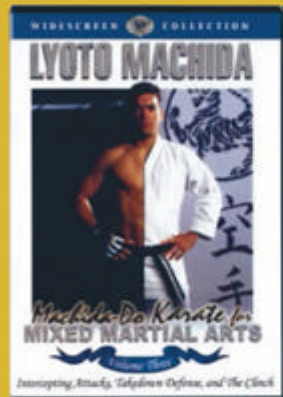
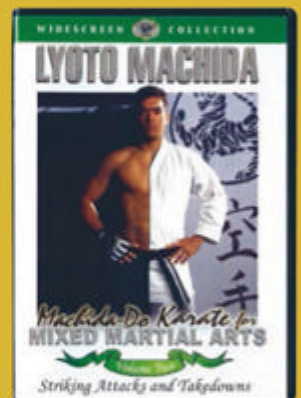
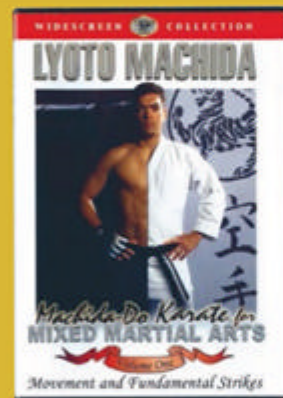
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# WHERE THE ROAD LED ME

Or how I renewed my love for MMA during a weeklong road trip: Starring Jim and Dan Miller, Frankie Edgar, Matt Serra, and more.

BY HUNTER HOMISTEK // PHOTOS BY DAN SWEENEY

**T**ucked away in the northern New Jersey wilderness, camping on the leafy, dirty forest floor alongside UFC brothers Jim and Dan Miller and their father, Mike, I found peace.

Not peace of mind. Not world peace. Not some kind of solution to get Ford and Chevy lovers together to calmly discuss their differences over some chai tea (of the three, this is probably the least likely).

No, this was a different kind of peace. I found peace with mixed martial arts, the sport which I so dearly loved, then only sort-of loved, then questioned and mildly resented. It's no secret to anyone who follows the sport that MMA is at best flat-lining and at worst tail-spinning toward the canvas, but one East Coast journey to meet some of

the sport's biggest names changed my mind, allowing me to find peace with this slumping (or is it?) sport.

And I'll tell you how it came to be...

## THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Longtime MMA writer and fellow *Fight! Magazine* and Bleacher Report contributor Duane Finley texted me one evening, and I couldn't say no to his proposition.

He was about to embark on the third installment of his Road Trip series for Bleacher Report, and he needed a co-pilot. During his past trips, he trekked cross-country to meet some of the sport's biggest stars — Carlos Condit, Cub Swanson, Gilbert Melendez and Joseph Benavidez graced his travels, to name a few — and this trip would be no different.

Now, however, he would be travelling east, to New Jersey and to New York, and his Nissan Altima would speed right past my Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania home on its way from his Indiana starting point. I called up a college friend and photographer/videographer, Dan Sweeney (who will go by his nickname, 'Parm', for the rest of this story), and we were in. We both had to work that week, and the trip would put us out a bit, but what is living if not a series of risks which vary in disaster (and reward) potential?

As it turns out, our decision to hop into Duane's 'Altima Fighter' would prove wise. The week ahead contained treasures and gains we never could have foreseen.

## CAMPING WITH THE MILLER BROTHERS



After a radio appearance on ESPN radio's *Rattling the Cage*, in Pennsylvania, to discuss our road trip with the show's host, Tony Reid, we set our sights on Sparta, New Jersey. The first leg of our journey would take us to UFC lightweight Jim Miller and his brother, UFC middleweight Dan Miller, and we did not intend to just lounge around the gym and chat all day.

Instead, the Millers were taking us into their territory: the New Jersey wild.

Upon arriving at the Millers' new gym in Sparta, Miller Brothers Mixed Martial Arts, we were greeted by a firm handshake and a smile from Jim, a symbol of greeting repeated by his father, a mountain of a man, Mike.

It's important to paint Mike in the proper light, so allow me to elaborate on his exterior appearance. Long-sleeve camo shirt. Camo pants. Leather hunting boots. Camo hat. A delicately manicured pork-chop sideburns/handlebar mustache hybrid (it was super badass). Six feet, three inches of pure man. At first, I sensed a bit of uneasiness from Mike — why are these guys in our gym interrupting our work? — but by day's end, we would see the impressive human being within in all his glory.

After a brief tour of the facility — complete with homemade benches and



**Jim Miller trusts his Randall's Adventure knife for all his survival duties — quite possibly the only thing on the planet tougher than a Miller brother.**

heavy bag hangers courtesy of Jim and Dan, respectively, a cage, and 2,800 square feet of mat space — we marched off to our campsite.

Upon parking our cars, Jim stepped out of his silver Jeep Wrangler boasting an impressive array of camping supplies. A knife — a customised ESEE Five, he would later note — a homemade longbow, a stocked quiver, and copious amounts of water, brandy and homebrew completed his get-up.

This man was prepared. I wore American Eagle jeans, an Under Armour hoodie, and a snapback.

Whoops.

After what felt like a five-mile trek through the woods, Jim and Mike agreed on a place to stay for the night. Mike began to clear a space for a fire, Jim began to chop wood, and Duane and I searched for kindling.

Parm, our fearless cameraman, took pictures and laughed.

The evening would see us hunt for squirrel (and fail), build a fire—something which Dan Miller executed with a bow drill, wood, string and a whole lotta friction — make coffee, eat homemade venison sausages, drink



Jim Miller instructs Hunter on the finer points of bowmanship



The Miller Brothers' gym, newly outfitted in shiny new Zebra Mats equipment

booze (their homemade red ale is fantastic, by the way) and talk.

Boy, did we talk.

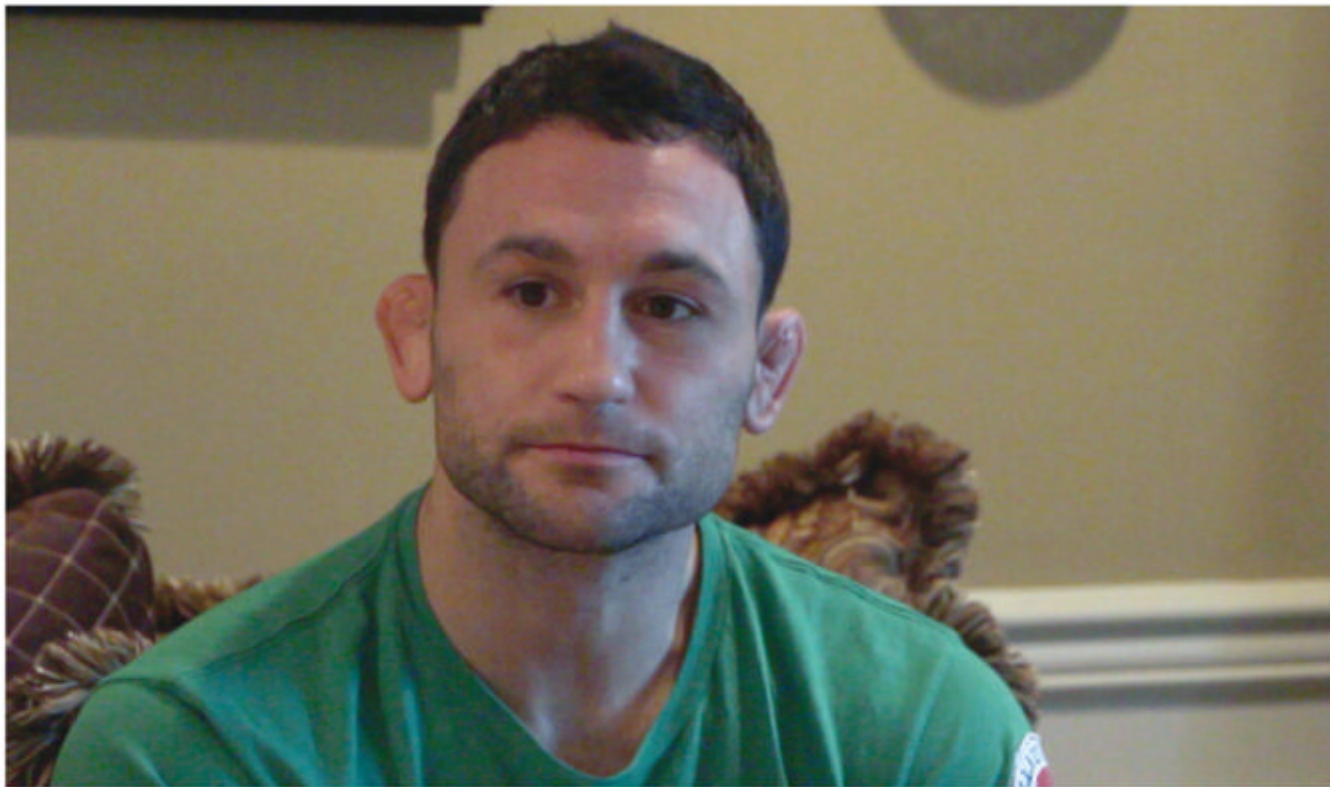
Traditionally in the world of journalism, any interaction between a journalist and an interview subject is to remain professional at all times. Thankfully, we weren't there to interview Jim, Dan and Mike. We were there to

find out who these guys were, what they were about, and why they did what they did. It was a friendly adventure, and we learned more by shooting the shit over beers and deer sausage until the wee hours of the morning with them than even the best interviewer could have possibly uncovered in one evening of traditional journalism. There was a

method to Duane's madness and his approach to 'interviewing', and it opened me up to the Millers' true selves.

Yes, they are rugged and they are incredible outdoorsmen. Every term you hear to describe their fighting style — hard-working, relentless, grinding — also applies to their everyday demeanor.





But they're also downright hilarious dudes, and the sibling rivalry between older brother Dan and younger brother Jim is a sight to see. Jim cannot let Dan have one up on him in anything — even Dan's successful usage of the bow drill was called into question — and the two bicker like a caricature of competitive siblings.

Jim listens to Wham! and allegedly knows the famous factory dance scene in *Footloose* front to back. He grows his own hops for his beer, and he has a mind built for marketing (even if he doesn't want to tweet). He understands the politics of the fight game, but in the end, he's there to show up and do his job. He's there to fight. The online bickering does not appeal to him, and he's not going to sacrifice his character for a few bucks.

Dan, on the other hand... Dan Miller is one of the most impressive human beings I've ever met in my life. And that's not to belittle Jim, Mike, or anybody else I've crossed paths with during my 23 years of existence on this planet.

But the fact that Dan can come out and camp with his family and some relative strangers with a smile on his face and a chuckle on deck is an absolute miracle. The elder Miller brother lost his daughter, Alexis, in 2009, just one day after she was born,



and his son, Danny Jr., battled kidney problems after birth, requiring daily check-ups and nutrition via feeding tube. This while Dan was still an active UFC fighter, mind you.

Because of his son's condition, Dan made a temporary home at his dad's place in Sparta. Mike lived closer to the gym, so Dan could stay with Danny Jr and make it to practice more easily than if he stayed at his own place some 30 minutes away. Every day, Dan would have to check on his son, insert his feeding tube through his nose and down his throat into his stomach, and drive to practice, a journey which was clouded by tears.

One night, Mike recalled, he heard somebody gagging in his kitchen, only

to find Dan threading a tube up his nose and into his throat.

"If I have to do that to Danny, I at least have to know what it's like," Dan told him.

And yet Dan smiles. And yet he laughs. And yet he jokes that my hands look empty as he tosses me another Dale's Pale Ale.

And yet he fights.

With plumes of campfire kissing my face and the cool New Jersey air penetrating my poor excuse for a camping uniform, I realised that Jim, Dan and Mike Miller needed MMA as much as MMA needed them — real, honest, salt of the earth people.

Despite the various twigs poking my back and the piles of dirty leaves





infiltrating my sleeping bag that evening, I slept easily. I felt a tinge of hope and of satisfaction. I knew, thanks to the inimitable character of the Miller family, I was beginning to love MMA again.

### REINFORCING THE FEELING

After a breakfast at the Jefferson Diner with the Miller family, Duane, Parm and I hopped into the Altima Fighter and steered south for Tom's River, New Jersey, to meet up with former UFC lightweight champion and current featherweight contender Frankie Edgar.

Already, the trip provided a payoff for me. The characters involved in MMA drew me into the sport in the first place — it was old-man-but-still-somehow-doing-the-damn-thing Randy Couture and Chuck vs Tito who initially captured my attention — and the Miller family showed me that good, interesting people are alive and well within the

MMA community. They might not tweet about it, but they're there.

With Edgar, this feeling was reinforced, as the former champ invited us into his house, showed us around, stopped for a chat, and poured us a glass of water before heading off to a sparring session.

Duane conducted a lengthy interview with Edgar from the fighter's living room, and between talking about his (then) upcoming fight with Cub Swanson at UFC Fight Night 57, his past fights with BJ Penn, and other landmark moments in his career, Edgar's true purpose in life became clear.

It was when his youngest son, Santino, ducked into the room for a second — camera still rolling — that Edgar flashed a wide grin and went into dad-mode, revealing the man behind the fighting mask.

"Say 'hi' to the camera!" Edgar joked with Santino. For 10 seconds, Santino

contemplated making his first on-screen appearance before deciding against it, scampering away with a joyous squeal.

From that point, Edgar's mood visibly brightened. He was positive and warm from the get-go, but after connecting with his son on a more intimate level during those few seconds, he became more upbeat, more satisfied. While the steel cage earned him that Cadillac Escalade, that Cadillac CTS-V, that MTV Cribs-esque pool/lounge area, and that impeccable landscaping, his life couldn't be farther from the lights, camera and action of the UFC.

His life was pitter-pattering around the house, scampering away from a camera with a childlike wonder and excitement. He's a family man, and nothing, not even recalling his latest masterpiece, a victory over Penn at The Ultimate Fighter 19 Finale, could bring him the same joy one look from Santino could generate.

That's special. That's Frankie Edgar.

And my love for MMA grew even more upon seeing it all unfold.

### A NEW YORK STATE OF MIND

"But I know what I'm needing/And I don't want to waste more time/I'm in a New York state of mind." — Billy Joel

Matt Serra's voice booms from inside Serra Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu in Huntington, New York. He's giving a private lesson to a student inside the



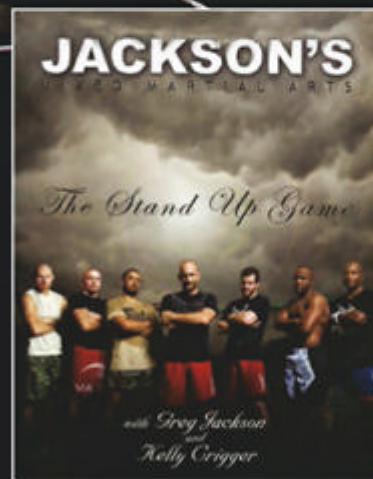
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facility's cage, but that doesn't stop him from being the boisterous, loud, and funny Serra I expected.

"Did you think that was just for TV, for *The Ultimate Fighter*? That's me, man!" Serra said.

And he wasn't kidding. From a box of garlic knots in his gym's fridge to a training session filled with jokes and snappy remarks, Serra was 100 per cent as advertised during our stay in the Empire State. He led us around the facility, proudly pointing out the little details as we went.

"Do you see that picture?" he asked as we passed beneath a photo of a younger Serra, arms raised in victory while a defeated Georges St-Pierre lay feet away. "That's the last guy that ever called me a midget on record. I knocked him out."

Amid the jokes, the jabbing, and the verbal beatdown handed out to his friends at the gym, Serra, like Edgar and the Millers before him, showcased a deeper personality during our stay. His wife and three daughters were on site, and this was all the ammo the real Serra needed to fire away.

After collecting his daughters for a family picture, Serra returned to the cage to continue his private lesson. Sophie, his youngest, began to cry.

"Sophieeeeeee," Serra called from the cage.

She stopped.

It's the little details — the one-word

responses to a child's call, the loving smile, the intimate embrace — that forge the real Matt Serra. He's a jokester, sure, and one that his daughters will come to appreciate and to love (or, in their teenage years, they'll meet his quips with a roll of the eyes and a reluctant giggle, I'm sure) as time draws on. That's Matt Serra the family man, and even with tough competition among Matt Serra the trash-talker, Matt Serra the UFC champion, Matt Serra the BJJ instructor, and Matt Serra the TV personality, it's by far his most natural persona.

It's him.

## THE DRIVE HOME

Duane, worn down from days of interviewing, prepping, and life on the road, turned the wheel over to me to get us home. Thankfully, the trip on I-83, I-76, and, finally, I-376 was a familiar one for a Pennsylvania native such as myself, and I was able to guide us safely back to my Pittsburgh abode.

Despite little sleep and a hectic schedule during the week, I felt rejuvenated when I got home. Like the Millers, Edgar, and Serra, I had a support system waiting for me at home. I had a girlfriend waiting up in my bed at 2am to make sure I was safe, and her parents, coincidentally, were in to visit that weekend as well. My own mum and dad sent me various texts and shot me calls throughout

the week, wondering how the trip was going and how the fighters were treating me.

I would tell them, but words don't quite do it justice. You have to get out, meet the players, shake their hands, and maybe share a drink or two with them to receive the full picture.

The world of MMA might be frustrating at times, but knowing that people like Jim and Dan Miller exist in the space sure makes me feel more comfortable about it all. They can make fire with sticks; surely they can carry the MMA sphere to safety, right?

While neither Jim nor Dan Miller nor Frankie Edgar could be classified as 'expert fight promoters' like a Conor McGregor or a Chael Sonnen, they are expert human beings.

And there's plenty to be said for that. There's character, values, grit, determination, and, above all, purpose behind the personalities involved in this tumultuous sport.

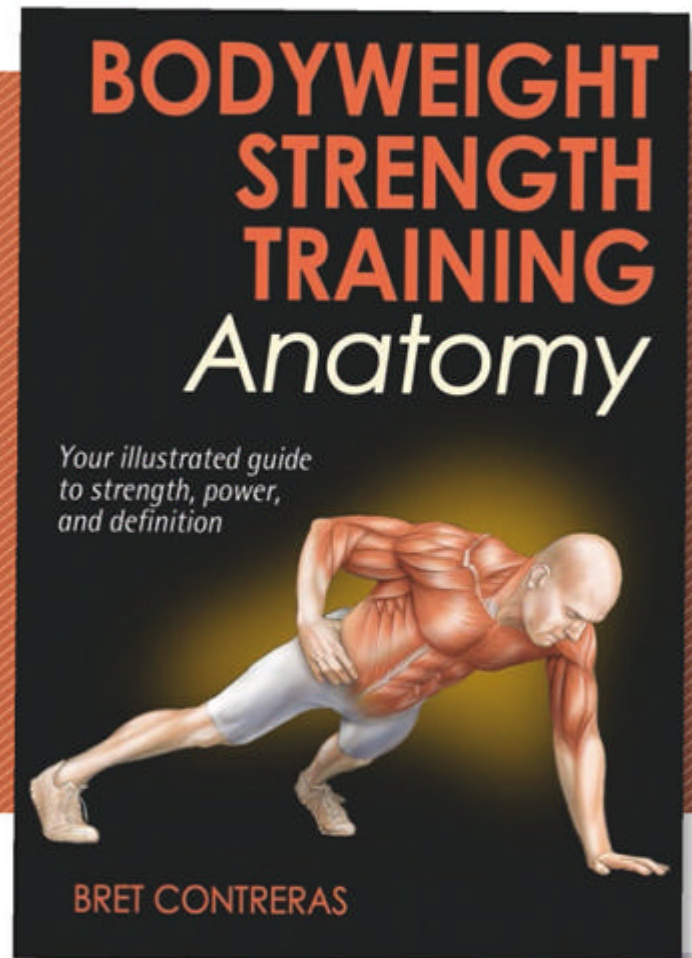
They're fighting for their families — past, present, and future — and they're fighting for themselves. Unbeknownst to them, they're also fighting for my heart, and with their generosity, honesty and good-heartedness, they won it.

I love MMA, and I wouldn't have known that if I didn't hit the road with Duane and Parm. **1**

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# A LESSON IN CONTROLLING DESTINY

Kevin Lee celebrates his victory over Jon Tuck during a lightweight fight during UFC 178.

PHOTO BY STEPHEN R. SYLVANIE-USA TODAY SPORTS

**"PRETTY MUCH ALL THE GUYS I GREW UP WITH, AND I MEAN REALLY GREW UP WITH...TWO OF THEM ARE ACTUALLY DEAD AS FAR AS THE FIVE GUYS I HUNG OUT WITH. ONE OF THEM IS IN JAIL, AND I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM THE OTHER TWO IN I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG. IT'S PRETTY MUCH EVERYBODY."**

# Living in a brutal neighborhood of Detroit, Kevin Lee watched his friends get swallowed up by lives of crime and delinquency. Following them down that road would have been easy, but he instead took control of his future and carved a divergent path.

BY HUNTER HOMISTEK

**K**evin Lee's upbeat positivity wanes for a second as he remembers old faces. Growing up in Detroit, the 22-year-old mixed martial artist has already lived dozens of lives. He's felt the struggles — real struggles like homelessness and excessive violence — of growing up in the inner city, and he's watched his friends get picked off, one by one, by the mean streets and the temptations they bring.

"Pretty much all the guys" he considered his brothers growing up are either dead or in prison, and Lee's own persistence and success is a product of dedication and a head-down-eyes-ahead approach to life and fighting alike.

"I'm from Joy and Evergreen (Detroit)," Lee said. "Anybody who knows that area knows that you pretty much have to fight to survive. Especially me, I'm light skinned. I'm educated, I'm college educated. They couldn't stand that shit.

"The dope boys, the gangs and stuff like that, they don't really mess with athletes. They mess with people if you're just sitting around and not doing much. But they respect the athletes actually... You hear it a lot, 'Oh, MMA saved me from the streets, blah blah blah,' but I think for me, it allowed me a way out."

Once he saw the exit sign, Lee kicked his work ethic into overdrive, pushing day after day to round out his skills and to become a legitimate mixed martial artist. The results were remarkable.

He made his amateur debut as a teenager at King of the Cage: Underground 70, winning via first-round submission. A few months later, in March of 2012, he made his pro debut. Another victory. Then another. Then five more before the big dogs in the UFC came barking his name.

Escape achieved.

This ascension wasn't bad for a kid who started wrestling in ninth grade and who quit just one month into the season. While most high schoolers would voluntarily give up the grind on the wrestling mats, Lee's removal from the sport was forced, a product of necessity, not desire.

"I only stayed around (wrestling) for a month, and that was just to learn how to sit in a stance," Lee said. "It was just enough time for me to get my foot in the door. And I had to stop because we ended up becoming homeless."

Lee jumped from house to house, finding shelter wherever he could with his family in the wake of a foreclosure that put them into desperation mode.

"I remember my mum picked me up that day after school and we just sat in the car for like an hour," Lee said. "We just sat there until we eventually drove over to my aunt's house. But I had to stop wrestling because of that. I didn't pick it back up until I got to the 11th grade, which could have made a huge impact as far as who I am today if I didn't start back up."

With Lee, those two letters—I and F—carry a significance that simply cannot be quantified. If he had followed the easier, more accessible path and stuck with his friends, where would he be today?

If he didn't learn to love the grind of MMA, how soon until he was back on Joy and Evergreen, joining the thousands just like him who squandered their potential and gave in to the street life?

It's an outcome he's seen play out too many times in his young life, one that was omnipresent and convenient at every turn. It wasn't until he found wrestling and, eventually, MMA, that he realised there was more to life for him than hustling and scraping by.

"I think a lot of kids don't realise their potential," Lee said. "They don't realise what they got... I didn't realise I was a good athlete until I got out and I got into it."





Lee fights Jon Tuck during UFC 178

PHOTO BY STEPHEN R. SYLVANIE-USA TODAY SPORTS

"When you're from there, you're always told, 'Oh, those boys up in West Bloomfield, the white boys, they're training hard. They're scrimmaging right. They're good.' It does put you down a little bit. And it happened to me, too. It wasn't until college when I started working out with those guys that I realised I'm pretty damn good at this."

"Pretty damn good" might be putting it just a tad mildly. After the 7-0 start to his professional career, Lee made his UFC debut in February of 2014 against former The Ultimate Fighter runner-up and current top-15 UFC lightweight Al Iaquinta.

For the first time in his career, Lee was bested. He suffered a knockdown in Round 1 courtesy of Iaquinta's sledgehammer fists, and despite taking Round 2 with some savvy grappling and submission attempts, he could not sustain that success, and Iaquinta stole the final frame, sealing the unanimous-decision victory in the process.

But Lee learned from that loss. It fuels him, and it's a primary reason why he now enlists the help of top trainers across all disciplines to round out his game. He tasted defeat, and he spat it out, bouncing back by notching consecutive victories over Jesse Ronson and Jon Tuck.

He calls Las Vegas' Xtreme Couture home for most of his MMA sparring, but

he's a regular at world-class Brazilian jiu-jitsu Black-belt Robert Drysdale's academy, and he polishes his hands under the tutelage of boxing legend Roy Jones Jr and the Mayweather Boxing Club.

This initiative to get out and to throw himself into adverse situations on a daily basis, Lee says, will contribute to his prolonged success under the UFC banner.

"Just on Saturday, I got to spar with a world-champion boxer," Lee said. "The kid was like 20-0, a Russian monster. That's what gives me a lot of confidence. I don't think a lot of MMA fighters are doing what I'm doing. I'm training with Black-belts over at Drysdale's and then world champions at Mayweather's or Roy's. That's going to be a huge asset for my game in the coming years."

From the streets of Detroit to a prosperous career as a lightweight fighter inside the UFC Octagon, Lee provides a lesson in controlling one's destiny. After he realised the path he wanted to take didn't exist, he simply put his head down and started walking, trudging forward and plowing a walkway only he could see.

He followed his heart, his instincts, and his intuition, and that's made all the difference. Others, though, aren't so determined. They slip into what's more readily available, the crime and the violence. Lee still sees it happening


today, and he makes it a point to go home from time to time and talk to his former high school about the importance of having goals and of following a dream.

The Detroit streets still flow with talent and potential, but most of it funnels into the sewer drains.

"A lot of those guys, the kids I grew up with, were better athletes than me, monster athletes," Lee said. "Once MMA starts getting some brothers in it, it's going to be different. And I'm not talking about, like, (UFC light heavyweight champ) Jon Jones. Jon Jones has the physical capabilities, and he grew up in New York, but he didn't grow up in Queens or Harlem or wherever. He's college educated, too. I'm talking once they get some brothers in it — some brothers in it — it's going to be a whole different ball game."

"I know somebody that can knock out the top 10 in one night drunk and high. There are so many guys like that, and they just never realise their potential. But it takes somebody to change that, and I think I can be one of the ones to do that."

At 22, Lee finds himself in a position to create a better life for himself, for his family, and for all the untapped potential back on Joy and Evergreen and everywhere else in the Detroit metro area.

Once homeless, he's now found his home. 



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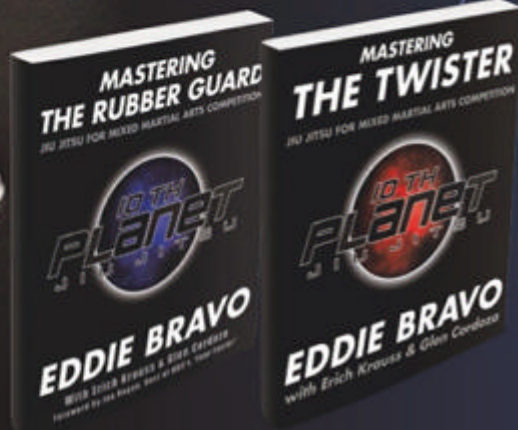
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# BELLATOR *Beauty*

**A proud Mississippian, Brittany Rhea embraces a career in modelling, as well as ring card girl duties with Bellator, with grace and beauty. We'll bet that, like us, you can't keep your eyes off this 20-year-old Magnolia State blossom.**

BY TERRY E. BUSH // PHOTOS BY SHANNON FONTAINE





**W**hat was the best thing about growing up in Mississippi?

The best thing about growing up in the Magnolia State is the Southern hospitality. People are generally so nice and outgoing here.

**How did your modelling career begin? Was it always a dream of yours?**

Modelling was definitely always a dream... I started when I was approached by two local photographers. After I shot with them, I was later approached by other people and my name just eventually grew.

**Let's talk about Bellator. How did you get hooked up with them and what was it like being a ring card girl with them?**

Bellator had a three-part competition in Memphis...and I won. It was awesome winning the chance to ring with them and being able to see how they do things.

**Are you a huge MMA fan and, if so, how did that come about?**

I definitely love MMA! It came about after I was asked to ring my first fight. I loved the excitement and then later grew even more fascinated with the sport.

**Who is your favourite fighter?**

Ronda Rousey, because she is an inspiration!

**What's the most memorable live fight you've attended?**

My most memorable fight was a local amateur fight that

lasted only about 12 seconds before one of the opponents was knocked out. I was impressed that it was so quick!

**It's obvious you're in amazing shape. What hard work goes into achieving that?**

I basically just watch what I eat and make working out fun!

**Is it true you're into kickboxing?**

I have tried kickboxing and enjoyed it. It is definitely something I would like to get more into.

I loved the excitement and then later grew even more fascinated with the sport.

**Do you have any other hobbies that you enjoy?**

When I'm not modelling, I'm either out with my friends, pursuing acting, partying in Cali, working on fitness, or being adventurous!









### MORE ABOUT BRITTANY...

**A girl walks into a bar and orders:**  
A Cosmopolitan.

**Worst pick-up line ever:**  
"Are you from outer space? Because your ass is out of this world!"

**Pick-up line that might just work:**  
No pick-up lines, just confidence. To date me you must be strong, respectful, and have a great personality...oh, and chemistry.

**You won't even stand a chance with me if you:**  
Are cocky.

**Sexiest features on any guy:**  
I love men with large arms.

**Sexiest features on me:**  
My eyes or my chest [laughs].

**Skinny-dipping: yay or nay?**  
If there is enough alcohol!

**Your favourite song today:**  
'Wicked Games' by The Weekend

**Your sexiest jammies:**  
My birthday suit!

**Thanks for the interview, Brittany. You're our undisputed favourite Mississippi girl!**

#### Follow Brittany Online



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BrittanyRheaModel

**What's the quirkiest thing about you that we might not expect?**  
I have a tendency to be really clumsy.

**What are your favourite food indulgences?**  
Definitely Pizza Hut cheese-stuffed crust pizza and chocolate ice cream with lots of toppings like cookie dough and sprinkles.

**What can we find you doing on a rainy day?**  
My favourite thing to do on a rainy day would be playing Xbox, watching movies, or just relaxing.

**The movie *Fifty Shades of Grey* opens this month. Did you read the book or do you plan to see the movie?**  
I never got a chance to read the book, but I am definitely going to see the movie!

**What's on your iPod playlist?**  
I have a wide variety on my playlist, from Usher to Breaking Benjamin. It all just depends on my mood.

**What's next for you? Any goals you want to accomplish next?**  
One of my dreams is to become a Playboy Playmate and to work with Maxim. Maybe that will be next! I would also love to travel to new places!



Middleweight Tim Kennedy loses via TKO to Yoel Romero at UFC 178

# WILL THE REAL MMA RULES PLEASE STAND UP, PLEASE STAND UP?

The rules exist for a reason, so why aren't they being enforced?

BY FRANCIS ABRAHAM

**A**pologies for the Eminem reference in a lame attempt to spice up a topic that may seem boring to some: MMA contest rules, or more specifically the blatant and flagrant breaking of rules that receive no penalty whatsoever. Let's take a look at why referees need to be stricter and start docking points.

## REPEAT OFFENDING

When was the last time you saw a ref dock a point? OK, some smartass is probably going to write in the comments that one happened last week, but let's face it, most of the time nothing more than a warning occurs, if that.

We hear refs warn they are going to dock a point if the fighter commits an offence a second time, but still nothing happens when the fighter commits the offence two minutes later. Rules matter in all sports and there doesn't appear to be a lot of enforcing going on in MMA. This isn't UFC 1 — the rules are there for a reason.

## HESITANCE

Fighters careers are on the line. A loss can have a huge impact on their careers, so understandably, a referee has to be SURE before he does something that may affect the outcome. Imagine the backlash a ref faces for docking a point and the fighter losing a fight because of it. Imagine a dominant fighter gets docked a point and loses the fight because of it — the ref would get blasted. But we are talking hypotheticals here; it isn't the norm.

But what about the fighters on the other end of the infringement? A fighter could lose vital points for NOT getting a takedown on a repeat fence grabber, or get repeatedly eye poked and lose because of that. Surely they deserve the rules being enforced; they didn't do anything wrong.

The MMA scoring system needs reform. The 10-point Must System is not good enough anymore, but that's not what I am talking about here. I am talking about right now, in 2015, and in the current rule set.

Let's talk Anderson Silva — who doesn't want to watch the catlike matrix movements of one of the greatest fighters of all time? But during the second Sonnen fight he was quite blatantly grabbing and holding onto Sonnen's shorts. The ref batted his hand away but he kept doing it anyway. I doubt it swayed the outcome of the fight and perhaps it was more likely done to really irritate Sonnen rather than a plan to win the fight, but perhaps it was done because these sort of things never really get enforced anyway. If fighters knew there was a genuine risk of getting a point docked, they wouldn't risk breaking the rules.

## REPEAT OFFENDERS

I can see a fence grab as being instinctive when someone is trying to uproot you and bash you in the face, but there are instances of serial offenders. You know who they are. And eye pokes? Yeah, you know who we're talking about there, too. Again, oftentimes a ref gives a verbal warning or even threatens to dock a point, but no real repercussions are happening. It's toothless — all bark and no bite.

The practice of actually docking a point will send a clear message to fighters and almost guarantee a new awareness for fighters and the result will be a dramatic reduction of repetitive behaviour.

At UFC 178, Tim Kennedy pointed out that his opponent Yoel Romero, and his corner, broke a rule — they didn't 'answer the bell' at the end of a one-minute rest period between rounds. It was controversial, with accusations and explanations thrown around in equal measure, but there was never any actual penalty enforced. A rule was seemingly blatantly broken, whether by accident or on purpose, but ultimately nothing happened. There was just an awkward minute or so with people scratching their heads and shouting, then the fight carried on, with Romero winning amid seemingly unparalleled controversy.

There have been many examples of these types of instances where point deductions could have (and should have) made a difference. It's time breaking rules actually carried a penalty. **1**

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# Foods to fight pain

**Are you sore after training or competing?**

**Did you know that pain and inflammation are your body's way of trying to tell you that something is wrong?**

BY IAN COLLINS // PHOTOS BY STOCK.XCHNG

**P**ain, redness and swelling is your body's response to anything that irritates it. Inflammation can be the result of training injuries, insect bites, poor diet, lifestyle and stress.

Food has the power to reduce inflammation. The following foods are powerful anti-inflammatory foods.



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Anthocyanins found in blueberries give them their blue-red pigment. Anthocyanins may also offer anti-inflammatory protection against many problems such as dementia.



## SALMON

Salmon is an excellent source of EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) — two strong omega-3 fatty acids that have been shown in numerous studies to reduce inflammation.

## KOMBU

Fucoidan found in kelp is a type of complex carbohydrate that is anti-inflammatory, and antioxidative. The high fibre content of kelp also helps to induce fullness, slow fat absorption and promote weight loss. But whenever possible, buy only organic kelps harvested from unpolluted sea.



## GREEN TEA


The flavonoids in green tea are potent natural anti-inflammatory compounds that have been shown in numerous studies to reduce the risk of heart disease as well.



## TAKE ACTION TODAY

Managing inflammation through diet, lifestyle and natural anti-inflammatory supplements is essential in your training.

## INFLAMMATORY FOODS

Foods that can increase inflammation include high sugar foods, heavily processed foods, trans and saturated fats, artificial colours, flavours and preservatives, excess alcohol and caffeine. These types of foods are best avoided. 

# Foods to boost your immune system

We all know that large amounts of stress negatively affect the immune system. Rather than rushing to book your next holiday, simply add the following foods to your diet in order to make sure you are covered this winter.

BY IAN COLLINS // PHOTOS BY STOCK.XCHNG

## BLUEBERRIES

Blueberries are very high in antioxidants and assist in your body's ability to destroy invading germs and bacteria. Blueberries also contain vitamin C and magnesium, two nutrients that are essential in maintaining the strength and function of your immune system. Simply add blueberries to your diet by including them in fruit salad or blending them into smoothies.



## GARLIC

Garlic contains alliin, which converts to a form called allicin when garlic is crushed. Allicin is often mentioned as an antibiotic agent and helps your immune system defeat bacterial, viral and even fungal infections.



## BROCCOLI

Broccoli contains high levels of both calcium and vitamin K, both of which are important for bone health and prevention of osteoporosis. In fact, one cup of broccoli boosts the immune system with a large dose of beta-carotene. Trace minerals, such as zinc and selenium, further act to strengthen immune defence actions.

## TOMATOES

Tomatoes are high in vitamin C. There is also lycopene in tomatoes that acts as an antioxidant, helping white blood cells resist the damaging effects of free radicals. Antioxidants give back the oxygen that had been stolen from your cells from the free radical to begin with.



## SUPPLEMENTS

In addition to the intake of these foods, it is also best to follow up on a regular basis by supplementing your diet with the below to ensure your levels are adequate.


### NUTRA-LIFE KYOLIC

This is an extract that provides all the benefits of fresh garlic in an easily absorbed form without the garlic breath.

### FUSION ASTRA 8

Contains herbs traditionally used to promote a healthy immune system and promotes recovery and support.

### ACAI BERRIES

Acai berries contain over 42 antioxidants and an exceptional amount of superfood nutrients including omegas, vitamins, minerals and amino acids to boost your immunity. 





# Best Pre-fight Food

**If you're training hard, you need to give your body fuel that helps you maintain strength, stamina and focus throughout your workout.**

BY SAM BUORDOLONE // PHOTOS BY STOCK.XCHNG

**I**f you've ever felt not present, or a little out of it during a sparring session, chances are that it will come down to what you have eaten (or possibly what you have not) and a good diet consists of selection and timing.

When it comes to fight training, the intensity required within your workout will need to be sustainable. Consuming products such as iFORCE CONQUER before can boost your energy, endurance, strength and stamina during those long, gruelling workouts. It is wise to understand that we must continually push our bodies past their breaking point to initiate muscle growth, strength increases and enhanced endurance.

It is also advantageous to follow up your sessions/workouts or competitions with supplements such as GENR8 VITARGO for quick recovery as carbohydrates are the body's preferred source of energy. Fast-acting carbohydrates like this will ensure that your energy levels are restored immediately. Additionally, you may want to include glutamine, which will help support healthy muscle tissue repair and recovery.

## GLUTEN

**What are the good and bad for an athlete?**

Carbohydrates are a significant source of energy, particularly during exercise. Pasta, cereal, bread, rice and fruit are foods that an athlete is likely to select, irrespective of whether you're operating at an elite level or simply for recreational purposes. When these foods are avoided, there is a chance that an athlete may not



be able to refuel correctly, or become deficient in fibre, B-vitamins and some forms of iron.

Gluten is the protein that nourishes wheat during germination from seed to plant. The gluten in wheat flour gives dough its elasticity and allows leavening; gluten also contributes to the chewiness of baked goods.

Unfortunately, many people struggle to digest these proteins correctly while others are diagnosed with coeliac disease, leaving them unable to eat wheat-based items. Common symptoms include headaches, muscle pain, bloating, fatigue and digestion problems.

The reasoning as to why many athletes tend to follow a diet free from gluten is to simply ease the digestive problems during competition. Improved digestion leads to



improved absorption of nutrients, which can then translate into performance-enhancing advantages.


Classic healthy carbohydrate alternatives within a gluten-free diet include all varieties of rice, flaxseeds, organic corn, tapioca, potato, quinoa, amaranth, nuts, beans and tofu.

## HEALTHIER SNACKS FOR ATHLETES

### Energy bars and breakfast bars:

Bars are fast, quick and easy. Be sure to read the label carefully as it's about the calories. Do not believe all the labels and what they say about enhancing your performance. It's the calories you are consuming that will give you the energy, not some magical ingredient. Ensure you read the label carefully!

**Dry cereal:** Try some cereals, plain or mixed with nuts, raisins or dried fruits. If you do not have time to add milk, then simply take your cereal blend with you and eat it dry.

**Instant oatmeal:** Simply add water and add some nuts, seed and sultanas to flavour the snack naturally. 



# Snack Attack

**You need to give your body meals that help you maintain strength, stamina and focus throughout your workout, but you will need smaller healthy snacks to get you through to those meals.**

BY HELENA DAVIS, NATUROPATH, AND IAN COLLINS // PHOTOS BY STOCK.XCHNG

**S**nacks are extremely important to provide your body with the macro- and micronutrients required for you to function 100 per cent.

They keep your metabolism working evenly, which helps weight control and assists with your recovery.

Here are some great options for healthy snacks that you can enjoy and feel good about.

## UNHULLED TAHINI SPREAD

Made from 100 per cent sesame seeds, this is a great source of protein and omega-6 fats.

## CARROTS

High source of dietary fibre, carbohydrates and beta-carotene to help protect your eyes and provide your body with essential nutrients.



## CELERY

High source of silica, dietary fibre, carbohydrates and a fantastic diuretic to help you get rid of excess fluid. Carrots and celery are also good options with any of the nut spreads.



## CHEESE

If you like cheese do NOT have soft cheese such as brie or camembert — too high in fat. Go to your delicatessen and ask for the hardest cheese they have — that means lower fat. Low fat milk and cheese both provide calcium — important for muscles and bone structure.



## ALMOND SPREAD


Made from 100 per cent almonds, this delicious spread is a great source of protein and omega-6 fats.

You can place any of the spreads on water crackers — no fat; or the carrots and celery.

## PROTEIN

Whey protein isolate provides your body with the building blocks required to create an optimum anabolic environment for muscle gain. A good example is Horley's Ice Whey, and Ascend Recovery, containing ultra active whey protein peptides that help to accelerate muscle recovery post exercise. Both products contain almost no fat or sugar, and make you feel content.

Protein bars with low carbohydrates and low sugar are another good option.

Keep training and keep snacking. 



# Heart-smart Nutrients

**Keeping active alone doesn't guarantee immunity from one of the nation's top killers. Heart disease and related conditions such as stroke and heart attack account for over 30 per cent of deaths in Australia each year.**

BY CLAIRE-ELYSE EDEN, N.D // PHOTOS BY STOCK.XCHNG

**D**on't stress, as there is some good news. Research shows that eating a healthy diet alongside a regular exercise routine is the best lifestyle choice you can make to keep your heart healthy. Here are some tips to tweak your diet to include an abundance of heart-smart nutrients to keep you fighting fit.



## OATS

Whole grains such as oats are an excellent source of both soluble and insoluble fibre. Soluble fibre is especially important for heart health as it assists with lowering LDL cholesterol, while insoluble fibre helps with moving waste through the digestive system.

## MAGNESIUM

Magnesium is a mineral accountable for over 300 enzymatic reactions within the body and due to its role in muscle contractility, it is essential for heart health. Magnesium helps relax arterial walls to maintain healthy blood pressure, reduces LDL cholesterol levels and enhances heart function overall.



## SALMON

Omega-3 fatty acids are found in fish such as salmon, sardines and mackerel and these healthy fats play a role in reducing 'bad' LDL cholesterol levels. Omega-3 fatty acids also increase 'good' HDL cholesterol, which promotes flexibility of arterial walls and regulation of blood pressure.

## BERRIES


Berries are not only delicious but they deliver a whole host of health benefits due to their incredible nutrient profile. Berries are high in cardio-protective antioxidants and polyphenols that may help to prevent cardiovascular disease and promote healthy ageing.



## OLIVE OIL AND AVOCADO

Avoiding foods such as olive oil and avocado because of their high fat content means you'll miss out on vital heart-loving nutrients. Unsaturated fats include poly- and monounsaturated fatty acids found in olive oil, avocado, nuts and seeds. Studies show that when monounsaturated fat replaces saturated or trans fats in the diet, levels of HDL cholesterol increase, promoting elimination of the 'bad' LDL cholesterol via the liver.

## CO-ENZYME Q10

Co-enzyme Q10 is an antioxidant nutrient responsible for providing energy to every cell in the body. During exercise there is an increased demand for this nutrient to provide energy to the cardiac muscle. Supplementation can help increase energy levels and help ensure heart function is optimal. 

## FURTHER INFO

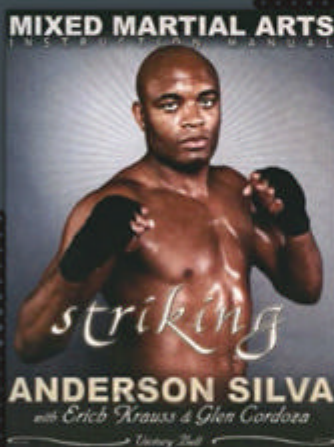
If you need help please contact us at *Evelyn Faye Nutrition*, 360 Bourke St Melbourne, phone: (03) 9670 1346 OR 269 Clarendon St South Melbourne, phone: (03) 9686 0086. [www.completehealth.com.au](http://www.completehealth.com.au) also has information.



# ANDERSON SILVA

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DISRESPECTS  
ME THEY  
WILL PAY  
FOR IT.  
I PROMISE

MY ULTIMATE GOAL  
IS TO GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS THE  
MOST EFFICIENT AND TECHNICAL  
FIGHTER THAT HAS  
EVER FOUGHT



## **Anderson Silva Mixed Martial Arts Instruction Manual - Striking**

with Eric Krauss & Glen Cordoza

UFC Middleweight Champion Anderson Silva unveils more than 150 striking techniques, detailing everything from basic punches and kicks to complex combinations through 1500 step-by-step color photographs.

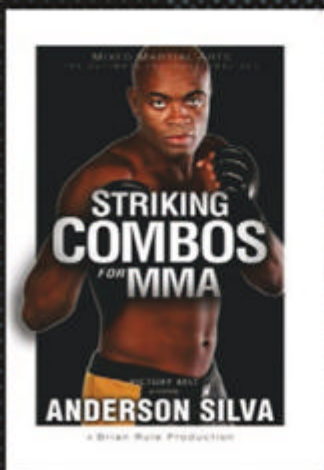
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# Ask the Doc

Doctor Peter Lewis takes the time to answer some of the common fighter medical questions we get asked here at the magazine.



Sam Soliman could be peaking at age 40

## At what age should I stop fighting?

This depends on what fight system you compete in, your weight division, your goals in life, and how mad you are!

Sports that require a lot of flexibility, i.e. taekwondo, are hard to do after the age of 30. Similarly for above-waist kickboxing. Not only does it get harder to get the kicks up to head height as you age, but the training for high kicks puts a lot of strain on the hip joint, and you can get premature osteoarthritis of the hip joint.

Freestyle kickboxing, with more low kicks, allows us older fellows to stay in the sport longer, maybe into the mid-30s. Boxing is even more forgiving of ageing, as flexibility is not required. Sam Soliman, for instance, is rewriting the rules on ageing and fighting. He is about to turn 40 and is peaking in his career with his win over Felix Sturm in Dusseldorf to retain his number-one IBF ranking in the middleweight division.

Many fighters are discovering that when they have reached their age limit in kickboxing, they can extend their fight careers by a few more years by moving down to the ground with MMA. One of the reasons for this is that height/weight ratios are very important in stand-up fighting where range is very important. As we age, it becomes harder to make the lighter weight divisions. Range is not as important when you are rolling on the ground as when you are standing up. Maurice Smith was a fighter who was able to keep fighting and winning in MMA when he was too old to do well at kickboxing. MMA is probably easier as strength and tactics are more important than fitness in this sport, while kickboxing rewards extreme fitness. As we age, it is harder to keep up the training required for kickboxing fitness.

Fighters in the lighter weight divisions have a much shorter use-by date than heavyweights. This is because of the gradual development of intra-abdominal fat as the years go by. One of the causes of intra-abdominal fat accumulation is the yo-yo dieting that many lighter weight fighters undergo, in which they starve themselves for a few weeks before a fight and then eat up big after a fight, regaining a lot of fat.

One of the reasons why Soliman has been so incredibly durable as a fighter is that he has never stopped training or put on any significant amount of fat. He has been ready to fight, constantly, for 20 years.

Finally, it is not age so much as life changes that often spell the end of one's career. This is especially so of marriage and children. One's other career, i.e., earning a living, is often important because serious fighting takes up a lot of time and many fighters have to stop fighting because they can make more money from their regular work. Only a few professionals in Australia have ever made any serious money from kickboxing.

There is now a revolution in ageing and lifestyles in Australia. We live longer than nearly any other nation with a life expectancy of 83. We also have the emergence of middle-age crisis behaviour such as purchasing motorbikes and 'white-collar' boxing. This is affecting many middle and upper-class males. I have a class at MHF we call the 'Masterclass' for those who want to stay physically and emotionally young in a ring. Many members of the masterclass are over 50.

**If you dehydrate to weigh-in and then try to rehydrate before competition, how long does it take your body after rehydration to replace the fluid around the brain?**

This is an excellent question. It is important as we want to be sure that fighters do not get into the ring dehydrated as we believe that dehydration, especially when it is associated with reduced cerebrospinal fluid, contributes to brain damage. There is a lot of debate about when the weigh-in should be held, either same day or the day before, or even 30 hours before, or the latest idea is two or even more weigh-ins with a limit on how much the fighter is allowed to gain between weigh-ins.

I have researched the subject extensively and have asked some of the doctors involved in boxing internationally and I cannot find any scientific research that gives a definite answer to the question. Joe Estwanik, the head of the Association of Ringside Physicians, says "I have asked this question for over 10 years! No one

will research despite my request to multiple universities. I have on the record, proposed the 'dry brain syndrome' as a mechanism accentuating concussion in dehydrated athletes and military. Not only is less water in the skull a mechanical problem, but there is a rebound phenomenon when they drastically rehydrate. Not only do we have to contend with raw fluid, but the restoration of electrolytes for nerve impulse transmission and glucose necessary for brain healing after fights. What factor does the blood-brain-barrier play in this process? How long for the H<sub>2</sub>O, lytes, and glucose to equilibrate?

Dr Robert Cantu, the author of the textbook on boxing brain trauma, also confirms that there has been no research on this subject. The importance of this information is vital for us to know how much fluid fighters can safely lose before a fight, how long before a fight the weigh-in should be held and what is the best way to rehydrate after the weigh-in.

I have thought of a way of researching this subject and I am going to start seeing if we can get some facts together. I have designed an experiment wherein we check fighter's cognitive speed before, during and after rehydration. The problem is that no-one wants their cerebrospinal fluid drained before a fight. It is very painful.



Randy Couture was still a UFC contender at age 47



### What is your opinion on the state of drug testing in our sport and what direction should we be heading?

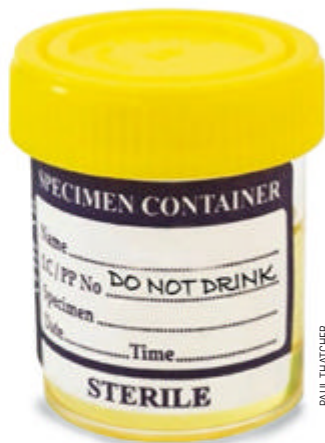
This issue's questions are two of the most controversial questions in the sport today. Well I am a bit biased when it comes to drug testing because I am a director of Suretest, which supplies drug testing cups for many sporting events, including motorbike races and world title boxing and kickboxing.

The obvious advantage of testing is that we can promote the sport as safer and cleaner and more politically correct. I think it is important for fighter safety that they are not using stimulant drugs that impair judgment. This is for the safety of both fighters.

There are problems with drug testing. The main one is cost. There is no way that we could afford to test every fighter for every drug. Because we can only test for some drugs, the effect of testing means that we will only catch out the ignorant and poor drug users. Pro athletes with expensive sports scientists behind them can always get around the tests.

The biggest problem with drug testing is that the very existence of the testing program implies that fighters have an unfair advantage if they are using drugs and I am not sure that that is the case. Some young people will think that if we test for drugs, they must work and therefore they will try them out because they'll do anything to win.

I think we need a drug education campaign in conjunction with testing to make it quite clear that we test to ensure



**THE BIGGEST PROBLEM WITH DRUG TESTING IS THAT THE VERY EXISTENCE OF THE TESTING PROGRAM IMPLIES THAT FIGHTERS HAVE AN UNFAIR ADVANTAGE IF THEY ARE USING DRUGS AND I AM NOT SURE THAT THAT IS THE CASE.**

fighter safety and that drugs do not give the fighter an advantage. Most good fighters do not use drugs. They are fit, they train hard and they have good skills. Many of the fighters who use drugs are lazy and they lose.

A problem with drug testing can also be seen in the Soliman/Sturm controversy where Sam Soliman was vilified because the Germans alleged that they had detected a trace amount of methysynephrine in Sam's urine. Methysynephrine is also known as citrus extract and it is present in many over-the-counter nutritional supplements. This is clearly the case of drug testing gone mad. Drug testing should be first about fighter safety, and secondly, to prevent unfair cheating, but as I said above, I am not sure that we can achieve this. Drug testing has gone mad when it comes down to testing for obscure supplements that you can get in health food shops, and when it gets to an AFL-type situation, even the experts are arguing about which supplements are legal and which are not.

Next edition I will talk more about supplements.

### What is your opinion regarding headgear versus no headgear?

There is a presumption that helmets make the sport safer and that is why they are compulsory in the amateurs. This is not the case. This was discussed at length at the WBC conference on boxing injuries in Aruba. In reality, the reason for headgear in the amateurs is more political — it's to distinguish themselves from the pros and because in some countries, such as England, where the British Medical Association is very active in its calls to ban boxing, it is thought that the use of headgear is more acceptable.

Many people believe that more protective gear means a safer sport. Gridiron proves this wrong. There have also been some studies on the effects of bicycle helmets and road safety that show they have almost no direct effect on head injuries.

Wearing headgear in fighting does reduce cuts and I would recommend it for a fighter in the fortnight before a fight just to prevent being cut.

One of my favourite sayings is: "Pad the weapon and not the target." I believe that the key issue is design of boxing gloves. There should be



### The problems with headgear:

- It creates a **false sense of confidence**. Fighters wear the blow instead of blocking or weaving.
- It makes the **head target bigger** so it is harder to weave out of the way of a shot.
- It makes the **head target heavier** and therefore slower to move to weave. Therefore, people do not bother to move the head and become lazy. This becomes a habit.
- Because the head target is larger and slower to move, it becomes an **easy scoring option**. This has meant that amateur boxing has now become dominated by headshots and the art of the body shot has been lost, which has made head trauma more common in boxing and I think has made boxing less interesting, as I am a big fan of the body shot.
- Headgear **reduces vision**. You can 'close your eyes' and wear the blow.
- Headgear can cause **overheating of the head**, which contributes to dehydration and reduced mental clarity.

excellent padding across the knuckles. Unfortunately, gloves are rated according to their weight. There is a presumption that heavier gloves have more padding on the knuckles. This is often just plain wrong, especially with older gloves, which are sometimes really heavy and have no knuckle protection. I spar with 10oz gloves with excellent knuckle protection, and I like my partners to do the same. This encourages fast, quick shots without the wind-up and follow-through.

The thing that causes the most brain damage is repeated blows, rather than an occasional sharp blow. I think the best way to really shake the head up is to put headgear on and then pound that head repeatedly with 16oz gloves. **!**

### DR PETER LEWIS



Dr Lewis is internationally recognised as a medical authority in the martial arts field. He has also been studying and teaching martial arts for 34 years.

Dr Lewis is best known as a ringside physician. He is often seen on televised shows in many countries. He has worked in 28 cities internationally, 22 of these on world title standard events. He has performed every ringside role, including doctor, referee, judge, rules co-ordinator, timekeeper, commentator, ringside announcer, matchmaker, trainer, cornerman, cutsman and has competed in karate, taekwondo and kung fu. He has had the pleasure and honour of looking after some of the most important fights and fighters in history.

Dr Lewis is also well known as an international lecturer and writer on martial arts medicine. He has consulted at ReCreation Medical Centre for 24 years.

He has also has a clinic at Malvern Martial Arts, which is especially for martial artists. Dr Lewis works with a team including a nurse, physio, chiro, podiatrist, psychologist, exercise physiologist, dietitian and masseurs who all have extensive experience in martial arts.

Contact [info@malvernhealthandfitness.com.au](mailto:info@malvernhealthandfitness.com.au)



**THERE IS A  
PRESUMPTION  
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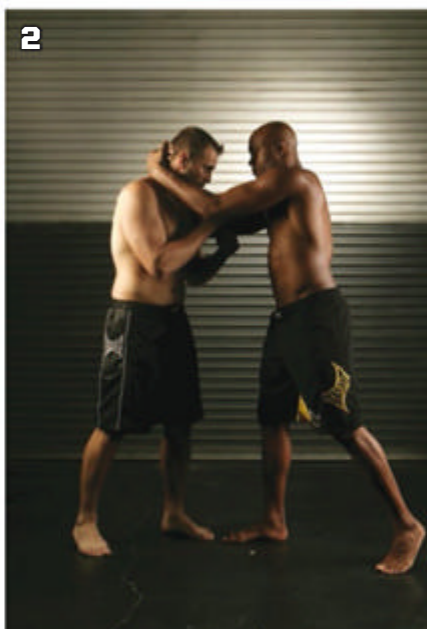
## ANDERSON SILVA

### THE SPIDER

With a strong background in Muay Thai, the great Anderson Silva has a myriad of weapons with which he can attack. Here are just a few of the options at his disposal, courtesy of the art of eight limbs. Practice these moves and your arsenal will be deadlier than ever.



#### TECHNIQUE




### Muay Thai Clinch + Knees

1) The Thai clinch is one of Anderson Silva's most dangerous weapons. Here, he reaches around his opponent's head with his lead hand to secure his initial grip, commonly referred to as the clinch or Thai plum.

2) He follows immediately with the other hand, covering his initial grip while sinking his elbows down tightly around the sides of his opponent's neck. This helps generate the leverage needed to control his opponent's posture while preventing his opponent from getting his arms inside to break the grip.

3) Once the clinch is secured, Anderson goes to work. As he pulls his opponent's head down, Anderson brings his rear leg forward, driving his knee upward towards his opponent's midsection, using his hips to generate force in combination with the downward pull.

4) Alternately, Anderson can throw his knee to the head, or use a fake to the midsection followed by a knee to the head when his opponent takes the bait. 



### TECHNIQUE

## Reverse Upward Elbow

- 1) Anderson squares off in an orthodox stance.
- 2) As the right hand approaches, he slips his head off centreline to the outside of the punch.
- 3) As he slips, he simultaneously drops his right hand and turns it out to load up the elbow.
- 4) Anderson then fires the elbow back up under the chin of his opponent for the finish.



### TECHNIQUE

## Spinning Back Elbow

- 1) Anderson squares off against his opponent, anticipating the next shot.
- 2) As the right hand approaches, he steps across his body to the outside of the punch and rotates his head. His torso follows the motion naturally.
- 3) As Anderson's torso comes around, he delivers a vicious back elbow to his opponent's face.





## ALEX CHAMBERS & LIAM RESNEKOV

### VT1 ACADEMY SYDNEY

VT1's Alex 'Astro Girl' Chambers is a UFC fighter and a martial artist. Originally an atomweight fighter (under 48kg), she moved into the heavier division to test herself on the first ever women's *TUF*. Although she is the smallest in her division, her victories over American and Japanese fighters are a result of her evasive and precise style.

Her coach, Liam Resnekov, Gracie jiu-jitsu Black-belt, runs VT1 Academy with his brother, Muay Thai world champion Dylan Resnekov. Together they have coached two UFC and *TUF* alumni and many jiu-jitsu and Thai boxing champions. They created the CORE MMA system to help bring the unique fundamentals and transitions of MMA to other martial arts styles, particularly wall work.

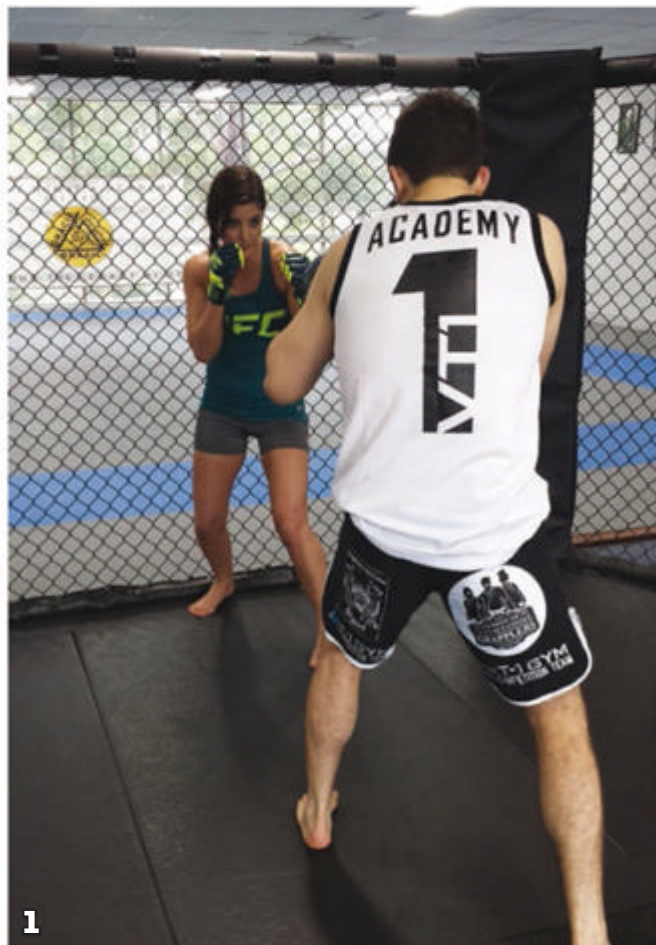


### TECHNIQUE

## The Twist – Off a double leg

The general public's perception is that Australian fighters have one big weakness — wrestling. The VT1 team believe that it is a strategic misunderstanding and the real answer is the mastery of wall-work. The

sturdy vertical surface is unique to MMA and requires a unique system to utilize it both offensively and defensively. The technique shown is way of turning a defensive position into a potential fight ender. [🔗](#)



1

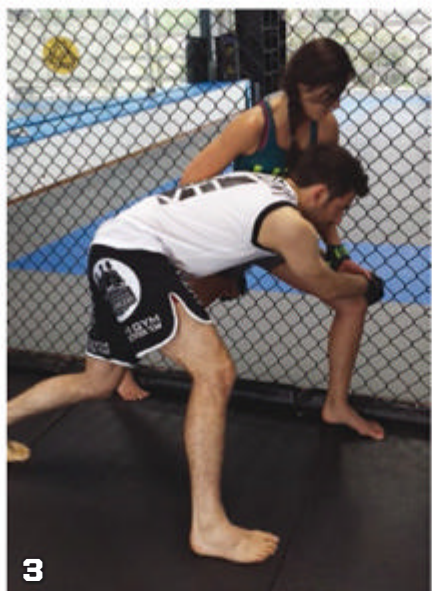
Alex and Liam square off.



2

Liam shoots a cage double under her punches.





Alex immediately assumes a defensive stance, always facing the head of the opponent. Her right arm acts as a 'whizzer', preventing her back being taken.



She peels his grip off. Key point: Her palm faces up as she grabs the opponents wrist. This prevents a follow up leg attack.



Maintaining the wrist, her other hand reaches for his nose. When she releases the whizzer, she presses into the cage, protecting her back.



She pivots into the open space while pulling her right elbow to her hip — The Twist — and his head with it. Key point: She maintains the grip on his wrist.



She knees him with her left leg while maintaining the grip on his wrist.



She follows the knee with a rolling elbow — again still maintaining the wrist grip to avoid a counter double or clinch.



## ADRIAN PANG & DAN HIGGINS

### INTEGRATED MARTIAL ARTS

Australian MMA fighter Adrian 'The Hunter' Pang is a warrior who has tested himself at the highest level in Australian MMA. Pang grew up among the tribal natives in Papua New Guinea, quickly learning the value of self-defence in this primitive, dangerous land for a young boy of mixed Asian/European descent. Because of his willingness to fearlessly defend himself and his family against any odds, he was given, as a young boy, the nickname 'Man Bilong Pait', which means 'warrior' or 'man that likes to fight' in Papua New Guinea's native tongue.

Pang has developed into a very technical but explosive fighter, winning the Warriors Realm lightweight title and twice defeating top Japanese MMA fighter Takumi Murata and also submitting Japan's Taiyo Nakahara and Dave Moreno from BJ Penn's team. Running out of opponents at 65kg in Australia, Pang moved up to the 70kg division and captured the CFC Lightweight title and then went on to also take the Legend FC belt in Asia and is now fighting for top Asian promotion ONE FC.

His coach, Dan Higgins, is widely regarded as one of the most experienced MMA coaches in Australia, with over 30 years of experience in martial arts and has trained overseas with many legends of the sport in Japan and America.



### TECHNIQUE

## Overhand right to single-leg takedown

Adrian Pang and Dan Higgins demonstrate an overhand right to single-leg takedown. Pang has proven the effectiveness of his explosive single-leg takedown during many of his fights in the past. [1](#)



Dan Higgins and Adrian Pang shape up.



Higgins throws an overhand right and Pang covers.



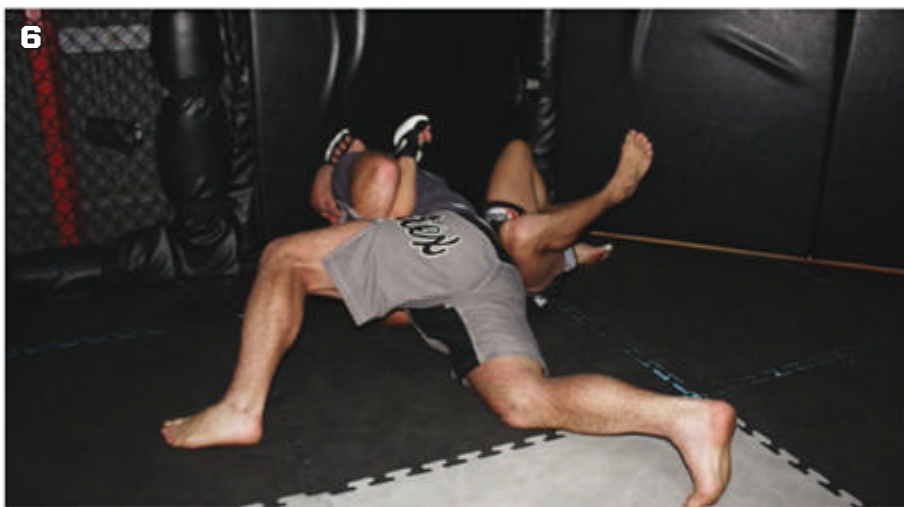
Higgins uses it to take a nearside single-leg.



As Pang defends, Higgins switches leg to the outside...



...and takes the double-leg and runs Pang to floor.



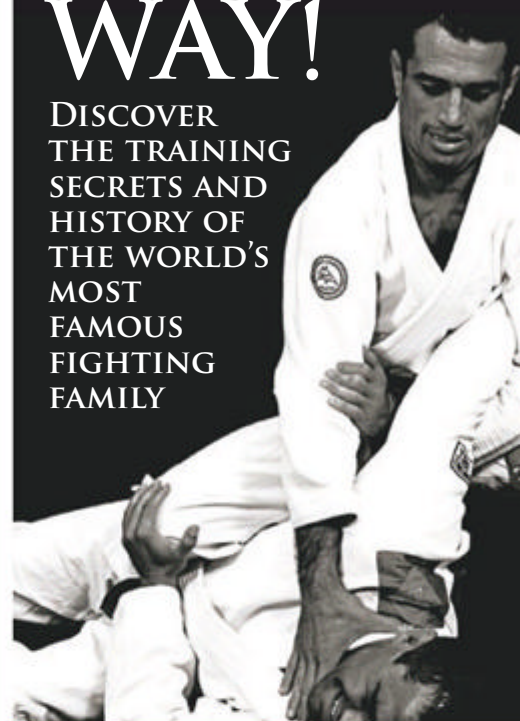
Higgins lands in side-control, making sure to keep Pang flat on his back.



Higgins squares up and gains a solid side-control position to dominate on the ground.

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THE WORLD'S  
MOST  
FAMOUS  
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FAMILY



## Brazilian Jiu Jitsu: Theory and Technique

The Brazilian jiu jitsu style stems from the premise, garnered from analysis of actual street fights, that the outcome of many fights is decided on the ground. While most martial arts deal only with the initial punching and kicking stages of combat, Brazilian jiu jitsu concentrates on ground combat. Photographs and step-by-step instructions show how to master the techniques of Brazilian jiu jitsu and increase your combat effectiveness.



## Brazilian Jiu Jitsu: Black Belt Techniques

Jean Jacques Machado now presents his entire Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu system in book form for the first time. Detailed is a complete repertoire of Jiu-Jitsu moves to handle any situation that arises, whether on the mat or on the street. Techniques are not presented in isolation, but rather through a series of moves that guide practitioners from an initial threat or opportunity all the way through to a submission hold. More than 100 step-by-step positions are demonstrated.



## Brazilian Jiu Jitsu: Submission Grappling Techniques

The 145-pound Royler Gracie has won three consecutive ADCC titles and four world titles, along with victories in Pride, Vale Tudo, 21st Century Warriors, and many more. Here, he spills his secrets for the first time, showing 102 positions designed specifically for the slippery, fast-paced, unpredictable world of no-gi grappling. It offers Royler's tips on successful combination moves, garnered from his more than 300 professional fights, as well as advice on training routines, mental stamina, and avoiding injuries.



## Mastering Jujitsu

Renzo Gracie — instructor of elite fighters and champion of many grappling and MMA events — will help you progress from isolated skill-development to a full set of tactics and fight plans, and introduce you to the concept of combat phases, teaching you to attack from any phase. You will learn how to react to your opponent in any situation. Whether you're caught in a bottom position or attacking from the top, in the clinch, Gracie reveals the key strategies designed to give you the upper hand and drills to learn them.





# ELVIS SINOSIC

## SPMA

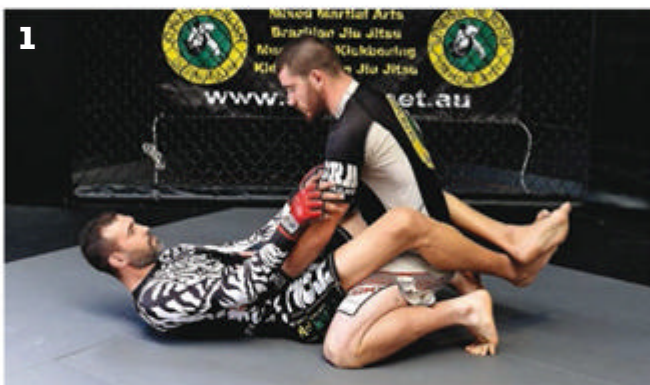
Elvis Sinosic is a retired Australian professional mixed martial artist. While he is perhaps best known for his seven-fight stint in the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), he has also competed in the Cage Rage Championships, K-1, and Pancrase. He has fought all over the world, including Tokyo, London, Montreal and Las Vegas. He fought for the UFC Light-heavyweight Championship at UFC 32. He currently runs Sinosic Perosh Martial Arts (SPMA) with business and training partner Anthony Perosh. Having trained in various arts for over 30 years, the 'King of Rock N Rumble' has been exposed to a myriad of art forms including: freestyle wrestling, taekwondo, boxing, Jeet Kune Do, Filipino martial arts, silat, Muay Thai, capoeira, kickboxing, judo, JB Will shootfighting, pankration, jujutsu and Machado BJJ.



## TECHNIQUE

### Far underhook escape into D'Arce choke

Featured in this technique with Elvis Sinosic is SPMA MMA fighter Andrew Mills. Here, they demonstrate a far underhook escape into D'Arce choke. The far underhook escape can be used to setup a D'Arce choke when your opponent attempts to pass your guard using a crossface and knee-slice pass.



1 Elvis Sinosic has been taken down and manages to recover guard. Sinosic has his hands on Mills' biceps as a control for when Mills tries to ground-and-pound.



2 Sinosic scoots his hips back to an open guard in preparation to attack with submissions or to stand up. Mills counters by pinning his knee to try and pass the guard.



3 Mills begins the pass by driving his knee over Sinosic's pinned leg and gets the crossface. Sinosic begins to defend by diving his right arm under the far armpit of Mills.



3 detail — Sinosic controls Mills' right arm as he prepares to escape.





4  
As Mills clears the leg to pass, Sinosic traps his arm with his own left arm as Mills goes to catch the crossface. Sinosic drives his right arm up and walks his legs away to begin escaping.

4 detail



Detail — close-up of Sinosic's hand positions.



5  
Sinosic continues to walk until his head is out from underneath. He then scissors his legs and grabs Mills' head with his right arm.



6  
Sinosic continues to walk his leg, joining his hands and pulling tight so Mills cannot free his right arm. Sinosic keeps walking until Mills collapses. Detail — close-up of Sinosic's gable grip.



7  
Now that Mills has collapsed, Sinosic locks his arms in a figure-four grip, locking in the D'Arce choke.



8  
Sinosic continues to walk his legs until he catches Mills' legs with his own right leg to stop Mills from escaping. He continues to squeeze until Mills taps or passes out from the choke.



## DHIEGO LIMA WITH RAPHAEL ASSUNCAO

This issue, *TUF 19* standout Dhiego Lima and featherweight contender Raphael Assuncao run us through a nasty Kimura defence against a single-leg takedown attempt.



### TECHNIQUE

## Defending the single leg with a Kimura



Dhiego and Raphael both begin in an orthodox stance.



Dhiego leads with the jab, but Raphael changes levels.



Raphael drops beneath the jab and catches the lead leg for a single.



Dhiego immediately goes to a figure 4 wrist control on Raphael's left arm, which he will not let go of the entire time. Notice the position of Dhiego's left leg at this point (between Raphael's legs).



Dhiego is looking to drop to a seated position as quickly as possible while Raphael's head is still low and he hasn't had time to adjust.



Dhiego uses the momentum from sitting down to rock backwards while simultaneously using the instep of his left foot on the inner thigh of Raphael's left leg to elevate Raphael's lower half, forcing him to forward roll. (All while maintaining his figure-4 control on Raphael's left wrist/arm).



When Raphael completes the forward roll, both fighters will momentarily be on their backs at the same time (or close to that position).



Dhiego needs to quickly switch his hips in order to turn to his knees and seize the top position (side control).



Dhiego steps over Raphael's head with his left leg. This will give him a solid base, make escape more difficult, and provides greater leverage to finish the Kimura.



Finish him!



## PAMORN MARTDEE

### CHAMPIONS GYM

Pamorn Martdee is a former Australian champion and Muay Thai coach from Perth, Western Australia. He started fighting at 13, under his father Phon Martdee, and six-time world champion Sanapar Noi. Pamorn lived, trained and fought in Thailand out of Sangmorakot Gym in Bangkok.

Pamorn is the founder of Champions Gym and teaches Muay Thai to men, women and children for fitness, self-defence and competition. He is also the director of Origins Fight Promotions.

Here he demonstrates the basic set up for the cartwheel kick or in Thai *Mah Deet Khalok*, which translates to horse kicks the skull — an attacking technique that can be mastered by anyone with practice and persistence and is devastating when landed correctly. You may have seen this technique used often by Muay Thai legend Saenchai.



### TECHNIQUE

## Cartwheel Kick



Stand ready for attack.



If you are a right-hander, aim to catch your opponent's right roundhouse kick — ensure to lock it tight at the ankle.



While the kick is caught, fire through with a straight right to the jaw with intent to rock your opponent.



Using your left hand, control your opponent's leg, preparing to throw him off balance.





**IMPORTANT:** Instead of throwing across the body to your right, throw the leg to your left to create an opening in your opponent's guard.



As your opponent is off balance, throw your left hand to the canvas and propel your body in a cartwheel motion, aiming your right shin at your opponent's upper body.



With the cartwheel in motion, aim the right shin to angle downwards, coming down on your opponent's head or clavicle with force.



## 'JOHN' WAYNE PARR

### BOONCHU GYM

One of the greatest Muay Thai fighters in the world shows us some of his best training tips.

In fighting, it's never a good idea to stand in front of your opponent. You want to be either out of range from your opponent or moving side-to-side, cutting your angles so you're never easy to hit. This is a great technique to practise on while doing pads and while sparring until it becomes natural. When it comes to fight time, you're not going to fall over yourself.

If you're in orthodox stance, at the end of your combo use your left hand like a hook to catch the back wrist.

But instead of using your knuckles, use the thumb and forefinger, or the palm to grab your opponent's wrist. Once you have control of the hand, take a deep 45-degree step backward with the lead leg, pivot on the lead leg so you end up 90 degrees to your opponent, still keeping control of the hand so your opponent can't come back and hit you with it.

You need to take a deep enough step so while you're 90 degrees to your opponent, you're still at arm's length away.

From there, spring off your back leg and deliver a heavy kick either to the leg, body, or, if lucky enough, to the head.

Performing this technique as a southpaw is pretty much the same, but as you finish your combo, throw a right hook, catching your opponent's lead wrist.

Once it's secured, step out 45 degrees with your back leg to the right-hand side of your opponent. Once it lands, pivot so your lead leg goes nice and deep into southpaw stance, still controlling the wrist with your right hand, keeping your opponent at arm's length. This makes just the right distance, so when you deliver the kick, the shin lands flush into your opponent's target area. Once you have finished your technique, keep circling away so you're out of danger, and you can reset and start all over again.



## TECHNIQUE

### 90-Degree Angle Kick (sequence 1)





## TECHNIQUE

## Southpaw 90-Degree Angle Kick (sequence 2)



PHOTOS BY SHARON RICHARDS

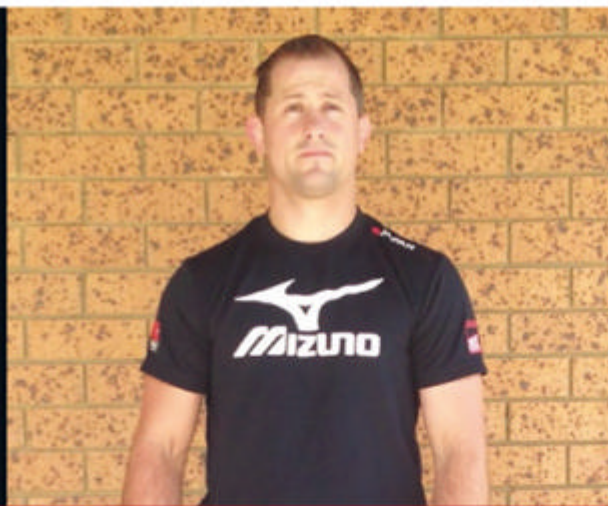


## MATT D'AQUINO

### BEYOND GRAPPLING

Matt D'Aquino is one of Australia's most accomplished judo players. He has won the Australian and Oceania Championships multiple times as well as competed in five world championships and the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. Back in 2009, Matt made history when he became the first and only Australian male to win the 2009 Pac Rim Championships.

Today Matt coaches judo on a national and international level by running seminars and training camps all over the globe. You can follow Matt and his judo at [www.beyondgrappling.com](http://www.beyondgrappling.com)



### TECHNIQUE

## Sandbag movements for fighters

If you have done judo, wrestling or Brazilian jiu jitsu for more than five minutes then you would know that your opponent is constantly shifting and moving their weight. It is also hard to replicate this sort of moving pressure in the gym using barbells and dumbbells because they are 'deadweight' objects; although, the use of sandbags is a great way for grapplers to mimic an ever moving, shifting opponent. When lifting and moving a sandbag,

the weight is moving all the time making a 20 kg sandbag very difficult to maneuver. Using sandbags in your weekly strength and conditioning schedule can help you develop functional grappling strength while also working your grip strength, core stability and overall muscular endurance. In the sandbag movement below I show you how to do alternate sandbag slams with a squat added in there to target the legs and to make you work a bit harder.



Start with a five, 10 or 15 kg sandbag in front of you.



Keeping your head up and back straight, bend your knees and grab the sandbag. Try not to use the handles, but use your fingers to grip the bag.



Drive through the floor as you begin lifting the bag off the ground; use your hips to lift the bag up onto your shoulder.



Rest for a brief second while the sandbag is on your shoulder. You may use your other hand to hold the bag and assist with balance.

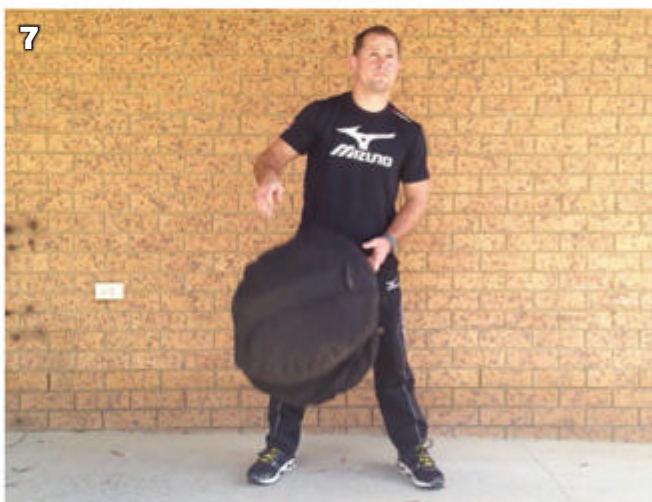




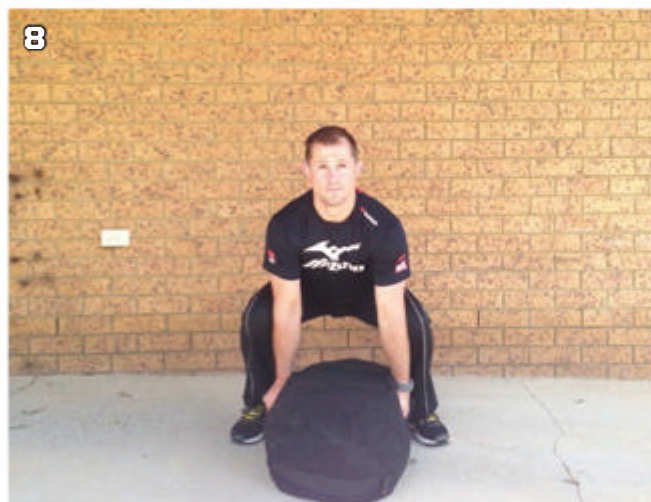
Getting as low as you can, perform a squat, (you can also do a lunge instead).



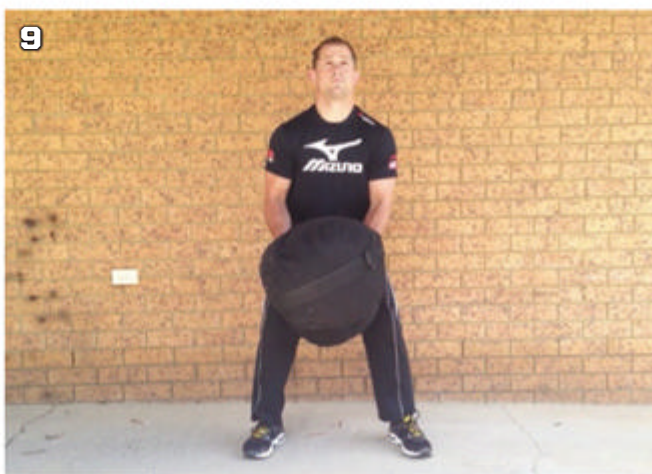
Return to the starting position.



Throw the sandbag onto the floor.



Bend down and pick up the sandbag. Keep your head up and back straight.



Begin driving the sandbag up onto your other shoulder.



Repeat the process on the other side.





## DENIS KELLY AND PHIL LAI

### TEAM NEMESIS

Denis and Phil are the head coaches at Team Nemesis MMA. Their fighters have competed all across Australia and also internationally. Denis is a BJJ Black-belt, Former Professional MMA fighter and certified trainer with the Australian strength and conditioning association. Phil is an expert Muay Thai striking coach, experienced grappler and is also a Level 1 CrossFit instructor. As coaches, they are both constantly learning and improving their skills and researching new training methods in order to get the best results for their fighters and students.



### TECHNIQUE

## Fight-specific conditioning circuit

This is a circuit that we use with our fighters to simulate the demands of an MMA fight. This is typically done 2–3 times a week in the weeks leading up to a fight. This is based on the fight having five minute rounds but can be adjusted accordingly for three minute rounds. The aim is to make the fighter as tired as possible, forcing

him to adapt and recover quickly between rounds. Each station in the circuit will last for 45 seconds; the athlete will then immediately move on to the next station. The entire round will last for six minutes. The athlete will then rest for one minute then begin the next round. We will aim to get through four rounds in total. **1**



Station 1 — Kicks off each leg onto Thai pads. As many sets as possible in 45 seconds.



Station 2 — Rope swings with heavy rope for 45 seconds.



Station 3 — Jab and cross onto focus mitts then...



...immediately shoot in for a double leg takedown. Do as many reps as possible in 45 seconds.



Station 4 — Box jumps. As many as possible in 45 seconds.



Station 5 — Picking up and slamming the heavy bag. As many reps as possible in 45 seconds.



Station 6 — Continuous knee strikes on the pads for 45 seconds.



Station 7 — Sprawls. As many reps as possible in 45 seconds and coming back up to fighting stance after every rep.



Station 8 — Continuous dumbbell punches for 45 seconds.





## HEALTHY JOINTS HARDER PUNCHES

Have you ever wondered how a relatively small and lean individual has the ability to KO a guy twice his size? Technique aside, one of the main reasons is kinetic energy. The ligaments and tendons in our joints act as stiff elastic bands that can store the vast amounts of kinetic energy needed for a jaw-shattering punch or a rib-cracking kick.

Thus it is important that your strength and conditioning coaches do not neglect joint-specific training days. The abuse of constant punching, grappling and other impacts can lead to inflamed joints or tendonitis, which can severely affect your training and performance.

Demonstrated below by Ohio Combat Club instructor and radio host Jeremy Loper are seven simple but key exercises to condition your major joints for the rigours of combat while keeping them happy and healthy.



### TECHNIQUES

#### EXERCISE 1

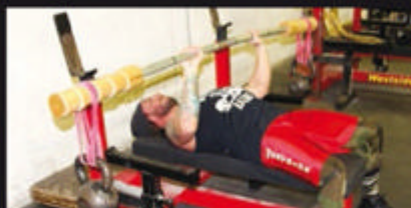
##### Banded Tricep Extensions

This exercise will stimulate the connective tissue around the base of the elbow and develop the small head of the triceps that ties into the joint. This is an exercise that can and should be done daily.

##### Execution of the Lift

From a standing position grip the mini band with a hammer grip. Extend your arms downwards while maximally contracting the triceps and turning your hands outward. Do not worry about maximal speed as that is not the objective. A pace of 60 per cent will suffice. DO NOT let go of the bands until all the reps have been completed!

**(1 set 300 reps)**



#### EXERCISE 2

##### Bandbell Bar

This bar causes kinetic vibrations as you bench that in turn maximally stimulates the connective tissue around the shoulder joints. This is a very versatile bar and can be used for overhead pressing and upright rows for other forms of joint stimulations.

##### Execution of the Lift

Begin by unracking the bar and keeping your upper back and stomach tight. Begin to lower the weight under control until it touches your chest then press back up keeping the elbows out.

**(1 set 25 reps)**

**EXERCISE 3****Hammer Curls**

This movement is well known but it must be performed with light weight if one is to get the most out of it for joint development. It is also useful as therapy for tendonitis. Choose a weight that is light enough for you to get roughly 50 reps in a row, but heavy enough for those reps to be a challenge. If you suffer from elbow tendonitis, combine this exercise with the banded tricep extensions described at the start before you work out and it will help to greatly reduce the pain and inflammation.

**Execution of the Lift**

Grab the weights with a hammer grip and stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your knees slightly bent. Keeping your elbows as tight to your body as possible, extend the weight upwards, keeping the hammer grip and maximally contracting the bicep as you raise the weight. Lower under control then switch to the opposite arm and repeat the same motion.

**(4 sets of 50 reps per arm)**

**EXERCISE 4****Neck Raises**

The neck is the most important area to train in my opinion. It needs to be trained constantly because a weak neck leads to a weaker ability to take a punch, to clinch or grapple and can lead to severe career-ending injuries.

At Westside Barbell we use a neck harness as our main neck-straining tool as it is quick, portable and easy to use. There are many variations you can perform, but the fundamental exercise to do is the standing neck raise. However, don't forget you must train your neck in all planes of direction. Choose a lightweight that is challenging but allows you to get 50 reps in a row.

**Execution of the Lift**

From a standing position with your head held high, lean slightly forward so that weight does not hit your torso. Then lower your head while trying to tuck your chin towards your sternum. Slowly return to the start position.

**(3 sets of 50 reps per arm)**

**EXERCISE 5****Seated Calf Raises**

The seated calf raise allows you to train one aspect of your ankle joint while simultaneously stimulating the joint tie-ins from the top of the calf to the bottom of the knee joint. Expect your calves to 'burn' no matter what you do and choose a light weight that is challenging but will allow you to get at least 30 reps in a row.

**Execution of the Lift**

Place the top of your feet on the footpad then roll onto your toes while contracting your calves maximally. Try to get as much flexion on your toes as possible before returning to the start position.

**(4 sets of 30 reps)**





### EXERCISE 6

#### Lying Hamstring Curls

This exercise is a main staple of any fighter as it conditions the hamstring's joint tie-ins for knee flexion and the rotation of the shins. This is an exercise that should be done daily, morning and night.

#### Execution of the Lift

Lie face down on a bench with your legs straight and your knees a couple of inches away from the edge. Curl your heels toward your glutes, focusing on maximally contracting the hamstrings on the way up. Lower under control.

(1 set of 200 reps)

(Sets 5 Reps 25)



### EXERCISE 7

#### Reverse Hyper


The Reverse Hyper decompresses the spine and places no vertical compression on it at all. It gently provides traction and depressurises the vertebrae during the process while filling the spinal column with spinal fluid and the lower back muscles with blood. This in turn relieves any pressure on the spine while pumping blood to all the ligaments and tendons that surround it.

#### Execution of the Lift

Lay your torso and waist upon the pad and grab handles that feel the most comfortable. Your feet should be above the floor with legs straight or slightly beneath you. Begin the movement by flexing your abs against the pad. Simultaneously raise your legs by contracting the lower erectors until your legs are nearly straight. Make sure you are pulling the pendulum arm with the backs of your heels. Then lower your legs underneath the Reverse Hyper™ as much as possible and repeat.

(3 sets of 30 reps)

(Sets 5 Reps 25)

Ligaments and tendons have a very poor blood supply in comparison to muscle so in order to develop them, high reps with light weight must be used to stimulate the joint with blood and help flush out inflammation. Other activities such as swimming or Airdyne bikes are good low-impact ways to develop and condition joints in conjunction with your gym-based training. 

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